

Workplan

**STATEMENT BY HON. GIVEN LUBINDA, MP. MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF ZAMBIA AS
PRESIDENT AND HOST TO THE 4TH MEETING OF STATE
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITION IN
2013**

Thank you Mr President.

Mr. President

I am grateful for the opportunity to address this distinguished gathering. I wish to thank you most sincerely for allowing me to take the floor for the second time. On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Zambia, I wish to express our gratitude to all delegations for unanimously endorsing Zambia as the President and host of the Fourth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions to be held in 2013. Zambia takes this as a vote of confidence and trust that States Parties have in our ability to contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

Zambia accepts these two core responsibilities with humility. We pledge to carry out the functions of the Presidency with diligence and dedication. The experience of the countries that have preceded Zambia in presiding over the CCM will be very instructive during our Presidency. We shall count on Laos, Lebanon and Norway for their guidance.

Mr. President

Zambia's contribution to the adoption and implementation of the CCM is well known by all States Parties. Even though Zambia does not produce, stockpile or use Cluster Munitions, the indiscriminate effects of Cluster Munitions on civilian populations, compelled Zambia to join other champions in fostering the Convention.

It will be recalled that at the 2008 Dublin Diplomatic Conference, Zambia was among the first African States that participated actively in the negotiations for the total ban of the production, stockpiling and use of Cluster Munitions.

Ahead of the opening of the Convention to signatures in Oslo, in December 2008, Zambia, in March 2008, organised a CCM Regional Conference for Africa in its tourist city of Livingstone. This was aimed at encouraging as many States in the region as possible, to sign up to the CCM. The Conference generated a great deal of enthusiasm and support for the Convention from African countries. This resulted in a significant number of African States being amongst the first thirty States to ratify the Convention. This effectively brought the Convention into force on 1st August 2010.

It should also be noted that Zambia served as Vice President during the First Meeting of States Parties held in Laos People's Democratic Republic in November 2010. Most recently, Zambia, together with Togo and Ghana, assisted by UNDP, and with the generous support of the Norwegian Government, organised the Regional Conference on the Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions that took place from 28-30 May 2012 in Accra, Ghana. I am pleased to note that since then, Togo and Cameroon have ratified the Convention. We look forward to the day when Sub Saharan Africa

will be the first to achieve full universalisation. It can be done – we have seen this with the Mine Ban Convention.

Mr President

I wish to emphasise that Zambia believes that universalization of the CCM is critical to the successful implementation of the Convention and in particular to the creation of a cluster munitions free world. The CCM is the best framework to get assistance to deal with problems of clearance and stockpile destruction. We believe that there is power in numbers. In this regard, we will continue to commit ourselves to the process of universalization.

It is our view that there is need to raise the profile of the 4thMSP in order to boost the prospects of full universalization of the CCM. We therefore wish to propose that the 4thMSP include a high level segment at Ministerial level. I have no doubt that this will go a long way in bringing to bear the much needed political will to achieve maximum universalization.

Mr. President

In addition to commitment to implementation of the above provisions of the Convention, Zambia is committed to working in support of all aspects of mine action. We all know that mine action is not only a developmental and social issue but also a political issue and ultimately a human rights issue. Innocent lives continue to be lost in countries where cluster munitions are still being used. It is therefore important that as States Parties, we continue to popularise the Convention in order to get many countries on board. I further wish to call on the Civil Society to continue to play their role in this matter in order to put an end to human suffering. We have a shared responsibility to ensure this becomes a reality.

Mr. President

May I now take this opportunity to provide a brief update on the practical preparations for the fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Zambia has started the planning process for the 4th MSP in consultation with other States as well as the United Nations. We have also looked into a number of possible venues which are available and convenient for hosting such an event. In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that a venue has been identified in the capital city of Lusaka.

With regard to the dates for the meeting, our proposal is to hold the Fourth Meeting of States Parties in Lusaka from 10 – 13 September, 2013.

Mr. President

Given that we are in the early stages of our preparations, a more detailed presentation of the logistics including the Visa issuance process will be provided to the delegates during the 2013 Inter-sessional Meetings in Geneva. We will also have a dedicated website and all relevant information will be posted there. Our distinguished delegates may however wish to know that Zambia is

well linked with the rest of the world in terms of air transport. There are regular flights into Lusaka from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas.

Finally Mr. President, I wish to reiterate that we look forward to working closely with both the Presidents of the second and third Meetings of States Parties, through the troika, the Coordinators, all States Parties and States not yet party to the Convention and also with the United Nations and the Civil society in the preparation for the 4th MSP.

I thank you.