



REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
DIRECTORATE FOR MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS

STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELENCY DR.
MANUEL

AUGUSTO, SECRETARY OF STATE
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE FOURTH
MEETING OF STATE PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER
MUNITIONS, 09-13
SEPTEMBER 2013, LUSAKA/ZAMBIA

MR. PRESIDENT,
EXCELENCIES, HONOURABLE AMBASSADORS AND
MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORP,
DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER STATES
AND SIGNATORIES TO THE CONVENTION,
DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS TO THE FOURTH
MEETING,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Allow me first and foremost on behalf of the Angolan delegation to congratulate you Honourable Wylbur C. Simusa for your election as President-designate of this importante international forum, which is the Fourth Meeting of State parties, and wish a very successful mandate.

My many thanks are also extended to the outgoing President, Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, for the excelent work done during his tenure.

I would also like to commend the Government of Zambia for the excelent working conditions placed at our disposal, which will certainly enable us to achieve the expected outcomes, namely *the Universalization of the Convention*.

Mr. President,

This meeting is taking place at a very crucial moment at the international arena, as we see a climate of uncertainties for the future generations due the reemergence of national conflicts, where the threat of foreign military intervention may turn these conflicts even more dangerous with unpredictable consequences for humanity.

These conflicts are spread all over the world, employing on a daily basis, dangerous weapons, such as cluster bombs, which

are well known by all of hindering the economic growth of civilian populations, whose agricultural activities are limited due to the use of these indiscriminate and dangerous ordnances.

One of the greatest plagues of modern days apart from Anti-personnel landmines, are the so called “Cluster munitions”, which are oftenly used by military conflicts by all beligerants.

Mr. President,

These weapons prevent the social and economic development from taking place, are responsible for the death of many people, creat obstacles in the reconstruction efforts of countries coming out of conflicts, have a negative impact on peace processes and humanitarian aid, and hinder or even delay the return of refugees and IDPs.

In adhering to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Republic of Angola wishes to encourage the international community to remain determined in promoting efficient negotiations for the disarmament and control of stockpiles, in the consolidation of the international humanitarian law, reaffirming the high and intrinsic values of human dignity, the position of human being and “the elementary considerations of mankind”, all of them constituting the foundations of the international humanitarian law.

The Republic of Angola considers the implementation of the Convention as a significant step towards the protection of civilians from the indiscriminate effects of these cruel types of bombs, during and after the conflicts.

The Convention represents a remarkable result of multilateralism in disarmament, based on a constructive cooperation between government and non-government actors and on the relationship between humanitarian and human rights.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Angola applies a comprehensive position in diversified assistance not only to cluster bombs victims, but also to anti-personnel mines victims including those directly affected, the victims families and community, and we request other State Parties to adopt the same posture.

The Republic of Angola recognizes the spirit of cooperation between Member States, United Nations Agencies, International organizations, International Committee of the Red Cross and the Civil Society who have acted collectively to support the process which led to the adoption of the Convention.

The Republic of Angola considers the implementation of the Convention as a legal and humanitarian challenge for the near future. An effective implementation should be based on the constructive cooperation of all government and non-governmental actors and reinforce the relationship between the disarmament and development. This can be achieved through the allocation of human and material resources for the development, justice and peace, which are efficient means to promote security and peaceful international order.

The Republic of Angola sees cluster munitions as a growing problem of great dimension. If its usage continues to grow, then the number of those using it will creat a development and humanitarian challenge even bigger than it was with anti-personnel mines in the 90s.

Angola considers that the proliferation of cluster bombs would increase the need of support from the international community not only from the perspective of the unacceptable humanitarian cost, but the affected countries would have to take a heavy economic burden.

The Republic of Angola reckons the urgency in sharing knowledge from the different international bodies on cluster bombs, so as to reinforce prevention, detection and reaction of incidence related occurrences with these weapons.

Mr. President,

Angola as a country has intensified the humanitarian demining in its territory, and has now 4 public operators under the umbrella of the Executive Commission for Demining which are being fully funded by the State budget with well equipped and better prepared brigades.

During the demining and clearing process of suspected or confirmed areas, operators remove and dispose all anti-personnel mines and other unexploded ordnance, including “Clusters Munitions”.

This small details clearly demonstrates that despite not being yet a State Party to the Convention, the Republic of Angola is deeply involved on identifying and destroying cluster bombs in all over its territory, thus complying with Article 4 of the Convention.

Under the comprehensive programme of assistance, social and economic reintegration of landmine victims, cluster munition victims have equally benefited from the continuous and medical assistance projects, physical and psychological rehabilitation, vocational and professional training in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention.

The current Mine Victim Assistance (MVA) national survey which commenced in 2010, included adaptable forms in order to distinguish a landmine from a cluster bomb victim. Surprisingly, just in the province of Huambo out of the 3.494 registered victims, 1.497 (43%) were cluster bomb victims, 1.361 (39%) anti-personnel mine victims and 636 (18%) by other ordnances.

Mr. President,

The process leading to the ratification of the Convention is being carefully carried out by all actors, due to the little knowledge the Angolan Authorities have on the dimension of the problem related to Cluster Bombs, and by the fact that the country remains one of the most affected by landmines.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the firm position of the Republic of Angola in ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions, whose process is already in a very advanced stage.

I wish to all participants fruitful deliberations, with the firm belief that on doing so, we are contributing for a better world for all.

Thank You.-