

4TH MSP OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS – LUSAKA.

STATEMENT OF BELGIUM ON UNIVERSALIZATION-

Madam President,

As it is the case with other conventions, when a significant number of countries have joined already, universalization remains a challenge. Yet since the 3rd MSP last year, 7 signatories have ratified the convention and one more country acceded to it.

We need to be patient and optimistic but bold and inventive as well, to find ways to convince the countries who have not yet ratified the convention.

The key question is probably not so much how to increase the number of outreach activities but rather how to better focus our action and how to choose the right political level to improve their impact and effectiveness.

It is not an easy task for reasons preventing a country to accede to the convention vary from one country to another.

Those countries who are not affected by cluster munitions and who have not therefore put the question of joining the convention on their priority list should be an easy target for bilateral, regional and multilateral action. The model legislation drafted by the Red Cross should help them to speed up the process of adapting their national legislation when they have decided to accede.

Then of course comes a group of countries who politically are willing to join because their population has badly suffered from cluster munitions and the development of their economy is hampered as communication networks are disorganized and vast areas are contaminated and cannot be cultivated. But at

the same time they cannot face the cost of the obligations they will have to face such as clearance and stockpile destruction. There the role of the other states parties is fundamental as they can offer assistance to help them to fulfill their obligations.

More than ever there is a need for cooperation and coordination between all forms of assistance from States, international organizations and NGO's to increase the synergies between all types of projects . Synergies need also to be maximized between assistance provided in the framework of the Convention of Oslo, the Convention of Ottawa and the Convention on the rights of the persons with disabilities.

Then of course some other countries may be reluctant to join the Convention to avoid giving up what they consider useful military capabilities .

We could therefore ask the military attaches of the states parties to promote the convention on cluster munitions to the military authorities of the non state parties and to engage in convincing them to use alternative military capacities and totally give up the use of cluster munitions as they make so many victims among civilians.

Finally Madame President I would like to call on all States Parties to the Convention of Ottawa to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Being aware of the specific circumstances in each country, we strongly believe in the political advantage for all States to develop their human security policy in an integrated and mutually reinforcing way.

Thank you Madam President