

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Stockpile Destruction  
Convention on Cluster Munitions 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties  
Lusaka, 11 September 2013**



Thank you Madam President.

The Cluster Munition Coalition warmly welcomes reports of rapid progress on stockpile destruction, which shows States Parties' strong desire to quickly and decisively rid the world of these weapons. It also indicates their commitment to early fulfilment of a key obligation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

The news we are hearing about stockpile destruction is very good indeed. Of the 33 States Parties that have stockpiled cluster munitions at some point in time, 15 have already destroyed their stockpiles, and the other 18 are preparing to, or are in the process of, destroying them. According to the Cluster Munition Monitor, a total of 22 States Parties have reported the destruction of 1.03 million cluster munitions and 122 million submunitions. This represents the destruction of 71% of the cluster munitions and 69% of submunitions declared stockpiled by States Parties, which is remarkable progress!

We would like to congratulate Chile on the news that it has finished destroying its stockpile, and are equally delighted to hear that Denmark, the United Kingdom, and FYR Macedonia— my own country — plan to complete destruction of their stockpiled cluster munitions by the end of this year. All of these states, plus the 15 that have already declared having no more stocks, set a fantastic example by finishing several years before their deadline. Botswana also reported in its Article 7 report last year that it would finish destruction in February of this year, but we have yet to receive confirmation that this happened.

By now we have heard from several other states, including France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden and Switzerland, on their plans to finish destruction before, often years before, their deadlines. Yet we still need to hear concrete plans from the remaining states with stockpiles, including Bulgaria, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Peru, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Spain, which had declared completion of stockpile destruction but have since reported discovering additional stockpiles of cluster munitions requiring destruction.

Madam President, in the early days of the Convention, we heard concerns that stockpile destruction would be a long and prohibitively costly process, but the news so far shows this is not true. The Netherlands destroyed its stockpile of around 190,000 cluster munitions and almost 26 million submunitions in 2012, seven years before its deadline, and the United Kingdom plans to finish destroying its stock of around 190,000 cluster munitions and almost 39 million submunitions by the end of this year, five years early. Denmark also set a great example by deciding to destroy its stocks four years earlier than originally planned. We would encourage all states to share lessons learned from their stockpile destruction efforts with other states currently in the planning stage.

We have also observed that destroying stockpiles can be done at reasonable costs, as Denmark reported today. In countries like mine without an existing capacity for destroying cluster munitions, technical and financial assistance from international partners can make simple and affordable destruction possible. With the support of Norwegian People's Aid and financial support from Germany, Norway, and Spain, both Moldova and FYR Macedonia established low-cost and low-tech systems to destroy their stocks. We urge all other states needing support to make known your requirements to the family of States Parties, UN agencies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations that can provide financial, technical and/or material support. And we call on all states in a position to do so to quickly respond to such requests, as required by the Convention and underscored in the Vientiane Action Plan.

We were pleased in FYR Macedonia, in cooperation with NPA and our Ministry of Defence to welcome the 3MSP President, Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, to our country to witness the first half of destruction earlier this year. We understand that the rest of the submunitions will be destroyed in October through open detonation. We hope FYR Macedonia and all other states destroying their stocks will celebrate their successes publicly by inviting the media, civil society, and other governments to attend destruction events. There have been far too few examples of such public events, which showcase the effectiveness of the Convention and build confidence that it is being fully implemented.

We are also encouraged by progress reported by some signatories known to stockpile cluster munitions. Of this group, three have completed destruction or have stated they no longer stockpile cluster munitions, and another is in the process of destroying its stocks already. As a confidence-building measure we encourage signatories Guinea, Indonesia, and South Africa to provide a voluntary report detailing the precise size and composition of their stockpiles and their plans for destruction. We understand that Angola has destroyed all of its stocks, but we would appreciate a formal confirmation that this has been done.

Madam President, we would now like to say a few words about the retention of cluster munitions under Article 3. According to Cluster Munition Monitor, at least 36 States Parties have expressed the view that there is no need to retain any live cluster munitions including explosive submunitions for training or research in detection, clearance and destruction techniques, or for the development of counter-measures, which is also the CMC's view. Those 12 states that have nonetheless decided to retain cluster munitions should be diligent about reporting on past and planned use, as required by Article 3 and as some states are already doing.

We would also like to encourage all states to re-evaluate on a regular basis the number of cluster munitions or submunitions being retained, especially those with the largest numbers such as Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands and Spain.

In closing, Mr. President, we can see that the implementation of Article 3 is generally going very well. We would again like to commend all those states that are working hard to finish destroying their stocks rapidly, and we look forward to seeing this trend continue among all States Parties.

Thank you.