

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement – Opening Session  
Convention on Cluster Munitions 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties  
Lusaka, 10 September 2013**



Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, allow me on behalf of the Cluster Munition Coalition to welcome all of you to Lusaka, Zambia for the first Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions to take place in Africa. This is a fantastic opportunity for Africa and the world, and we call on you all to take full advantage of it!

Many candles no doubt, were burned in making this assembly the assured success that it is turning out to be. Zambia deserves our special commendation for nimbly pulling this together.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it goes without saying that Africa, the heart and soul of the Convention, was an instrumental midwife in bringing the Convention on Cluster Munitions into existence. Africa remains a natural leader of the Convention with 42 out of the 112 States that have joined the convention hewn from Africa rock. As well, one-fourth of states that have suffered from cluster munition use are also in Africa, so we know why the Convention is essential.

As my colleagues from the CMC will re-iterate throughout the week, we are happy to see that the Convention is already working to save lives and prevent further use of cluster munitions. The norm against use is on its way to being firmly established, affecting most states' behavior worldwide. Among States Parties, over two-thirds of stockpiled cluster munitions have been destroyed, and work on clearance and assistance is progressing. This progress shows that full implementation of the Convention is not complicated, is not too expensive, and it can be done!

But we still face a challenge on universalization, so we applaud Zambia's wise choice to make this the theme of this meeting. Unless we universalize, our planet will remain unsafe from the threat of cluster munitions. We join Zambia's call to those still in the valley of indecision to climb up and out of this valley and join the family of States Parties to the Convention.

A special onus is on the remaining 12 States in Africa still stranded outside the Convention to make haste and join forces with those that are States Parties already. This is Africa's time. A great light from Lusaka is now shining brightly, leading all her sons and daughters, in a single file, to a new and glorious day, a day without the fear of the menace of Cluster Munitions

There are many reasons that each and every state outside the Convention should join, and no good reason to stay outside. With every new country that joins the CCM, the global norm rejecting this weapon, which is already strong, is strengthened even further. Each new state joining the Convention adds their voice to the multitude of states saying no more use of cluster munitions, ever. Their voices show their solidarity with affected countries, with affected communities and help protect civilians from any further harm. Every voice counts, but we especially need all states with stockpiles, contaminated areas, and victims to join to reach the full potential of the Convention.

All States Parties to the Convention need to be repeating these messages. It is their legal and moral duty to remain engaged and encourage those outside the Convention to join without fail and without delay. Lusaka presents a unique chance to stand up and be counted. This opportunity must not be missed.

As a proud Zambian and distinctly African, allow me to prod Africa to fight like a lion with might and mane to win decisively by universalizing totally.

As a global citizen, I would urge all – inside and outside this continent - to join the Convention if they have not yet done so.

As a human being, talking to fellow human being, I invite all us here today to join forces as a community to fully universalize and implement the Convention. This is a legacy worth bequeathing on future generations. We owe it to them to make the world safer in this way.

As a Medical Doctor, I prescribe universalization as a sure antidote against the use of Cluster Munitions

We also need to work all together to make sure that cluster munitions are never again used by anyone, anywhere. The widespread use of cluster munitions in Syria over the past year is an ugly stain on the convention and a grim reminder of the work we need to do to fully universalize the norm against use. States here gathered must, one and all, line up to loudly condemn any use of cluster munitions.

Distinguished delegates, as you know, the world's seventh Natural Wonder, the Mighty Victoria Falls, resides 600 kilometers from here in Livingstone. The Mighty Victoria Falls, the only one of its kind, appropriately known as the Mosi "O" Tunya or Smoke that Thunders in the local dialect, is the world's greatest curtain of falling waters. The falls' thundering roar, the spirit of the Mosi "O' Tunya, is with us today in this conference. May states feel the wind from the falling water, and let it push us to swiftly universalize the Convention.

The CMC is here in full force, working with you all this week and beyond to ensure the Convention is respected and its membership expanded. We look forward to a continued close partnership with you all.

Welcome to Zambia!