

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on International Cooperation and Assistance
Convention on Cluster Munitions 5th Meeting of the States Parties
San José, Costa Rica, 4 September 2013**



Thank you Mr. President.

Five years ago I had the opportunity to attend the destruction of cluster munitions stockpiled by my country, Colombia. There we were able to witness the government eradicating forever a weapon that has been killing innocent children, men and women around the world.

I speak in the plural because along with me came dozens of ambassadors of States, both inside and outside of the Convention. We discovered how a seemingly delicate and complex operation could be done at low cost and with high efficiency if based on a key element: the decision on one side to destroy them and on the other side to support such destruction.

It is with this sort of decision that stockpiled cluster munitions can be destroyed, contaminated land can be cleared, and the lives of victims can be rebuilt. So our impassioned plea from the Cluster Munition Coalition is for all states to continue to provide international cooperation and assistance to all in need so that the Convention's multiple promises can be fulfilled.

As we have done in previous meetings and conferences, we would like to remind States Parties in a position to do so that it is their legal obligation under Article 6 to support all other states that require assistance. And the experience of recent years in the implementation of the convention has shown us that almost all States Parties can provide some kind of help to the other members. For example, those who have advanced in victim assistance issues are able to offer advice to others who do not have the same degree of progress. The same applies to the processes of destruction or clearance. This shows that not all aid is limited to financial resources. Triangular cooperation and developments in South-South cooperation have shown that any state that has valuable experience, technical advice or material resources can make a key contribution to the fulfillment of treaty obligations.

Under the principle of shared responsibility, states that require support should also contribute. This contribution first requires gaining knowledge of and sharing the reality of the problem, through studies on victims and their needs, high quality survey of suspected contaminated areas or a comprehensive inventory of cluster munitions stockpiles. States must also efficiently manage the support received to ensure it is best oriented toward helping communities recover from past cluster munition use and towards meeting convention commitments and deadlines. States should also facilitate the entry and exit of personnel, materials and equipment that come from donor states, and simplify administrative procedures for international operators to carry out their work in the field. And last, but not least, states should continuously monitor progress and clearly show the results achieved with the resources requested, as well as any difficulties that may arise.

The CMC also believes that international cooperation should not be limited to a simple transfer of funds, materials or expertise. Affected States and donors should seek to work together, as partners in a task that involves both parties. The objectives of the Convention are only reached if all parties focus their energies in the same direction.

Our desire and hope is for this world to be "pura vida," and in order to achieve that we must have a world free of cluster munitions, and for affected people to have their rights fully respected.

Mr. President, the progress of the Convention has reached an important point, and the achievements in recent years have been significant. Let's make the most of this moment, and keep up the positive momentum on

implementation. Let's work to develop all the possible alternatives that can provide continuity and strengthen international cooperation. This way we can all ensure that any remaining needs for assistance are met and we can achieve our common objectives. This way we can all stop cluster bombs, together.

Thank you.