



**Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
(San Jose', 1-5 September 2014)
Statement by Italy under agenda item 9**

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives and Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me, also in my national capacity, congratulate you, Mr. President, on your Chairmanship of this important meeting and assure you of my delegation's full support.

Italy fully aligns itself to the statement of the European Union. I will add some remarks.

Italy is grateful to the Government of Costa Rica for organizing and hosting the 5th Meeting of State Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We would also like to thank the Government of Zambia for the efforts displayed during its Presidency to support the implementation and the universalization of the Convention.

This event gives us the opportunity to take stock of the progress achieved so far, and to review challenges towards the Convention first Review Conference in 2015. In this prospect, we welcome the draft San Jose' Progress Report, which provides a good working basis for our discussions.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is an important milestone on the way to a more secure and peaceful world. With its overarching goal of putting an end to the suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions, the Convention promotes not only international disarmament, but also International Humanitarian Law.

Fully sharing the guiding principles of the Convention, Italy has supported the negotiating process from the start and is engaged in fulfilling its national obligations. In this respect, it is with satisfaction that I can say that our stockpile

destruction process is on track for completion by 2015, three years ahead of the deadline.

Mr. President,

The Vientiane Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the First Meeting of States Parties in 2010 continue to provide guidance for our actions. In this regard, Italy attaches great importance to universalization and to international cooperation and assistance. We also highly value the development of partnerships between States and all the other actors involved in the implementation of the Convention. We welcome in particular the fundamental role that civil society is playing.

We also welcome the progress made in the universalization of the Convention, and the growth of the number of States parties and signatories. However, we regret that many States, including the major possessors and producers, are still outside the Convention. Reports of alleged use of cluster weapons in areas of conflict further add to the importance of pursuing universal adherence. In this framework, we are deeply concerned about the alleged use of such weapons against civilians in South Sudan, Syria and Ukraine. We must therefore spare no effort in achieving such goal.

The other pillar we must build on is the international cooperation and assistance. Italy is deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of explosive remnants of war, and of explosive devices that have indiscriminate effects. Accordingly, we have been supporting mine action in a concrete way, especially in the field of clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance, including cluster munitions remnants, stockpile destruction and assistance to victims. In this spirit, over the last few years Italy has devoted over 12 million of Euros to mine action programs. The assistance provided in 2013 included support to activities in Libya, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan.

I also add that, in the field of humanitarian aid, a key priority of the Italian action is the protection of vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, in conflict and emergency situations.

Italy finally praises the steps undertaken under the Zambian Presidency to ensure that the new Implementation Support Unit of the Convention will be fully operational by the 1st Review Conference. We are considering how best we can contribute to the implementation support activities. We are grateful to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining for hosting the unit, and to the interim ISU managed by UNDP for its work in support of the implementation of the Convention.

Mr. President,

A number of issues have to be dealt with during this meeting in order to make the work of the CCM more effective. Let me assure you that the Italian delegation will do its part to support you and contribute to a positive outcome of this meeting, that paves the way to a successful Review Conference next year.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.