

STATEMENT

Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions San José, Costa Rica, 2nd – 5th September 2014

Mr. President,

It is a pleasure for my delegation to address this Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Please allow the delegation of Jamaica to congratulate you on the assumption of the Chair of this august assembly and to thank you for convening this important landmark multilateral meeting, being the first Meeting of States Parties to be held in the Latin American and the Caribbean region and also, the last meeting prior to the Convention's First Review Conference in 2015.

At the outset, permit me to thank the Government of Costa Rica for the warm welcome and hospitality which it has extended to delegations. Additionally, we extend our appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Secretariat for its efforts in ensuring that this Meeting became a reality.

Mr. President,

The adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 8th May 2008 in Oslo, was significant for the disarmament agenda, as for decades, cluster munitions have had a lethal and indiscriminate impact on the lives of civilians, including vulnerable groups such as women and children. The Government of Jamaica was, therefore, pleased with the entry into force of the Treaty in August 2010, as it represented a progressive step by the international community towards ridding the world of cluster munitions.

While Jamaica does not possess cluster munitions, and is not affected by these weapons, we are fully aware of their catastrophic effects on civilians and therefore support the aims and objectives of the Convention which seek to ban their use. This is in keeping with our longstanding tradition of giving political support to international norms aimed at strengthening the process of general and complete disarmament in all its aspects. Further, Jamaica has no intention of importing or obtaining such weapons, or of having them stockpiled for use by our military and security forces in the execution of their duties.

To this end, Jamaica actively participated in the negotiations leading to the adoption of the Convention, and also signed the Convention on 12 June 2009. Our signing of the Convention not only signaled our support for this initiative, but also demonstrated our solidarity with states in the region and others across the globe, affected by the use of such devices. The Government of Jamaica is fully cognisant that the universalisation of the Convention is necessary for the total elimination of cluster munitions. In this context, the Government is in the process of preparing applicable domestic legislation with a view to acceding to the Convention at its earliest opportunity.

Mr. President,

On 3rd June 2014, Jamaica ratified the Arms Trade Treaty, which is expected to regulate the movement of small arms. Of significance is the fact that such legislation would also prohibit the importation of weapons classified as cluster munitions.

The convening of this Meeting is yet another crucial step towards eliminating cluster munitions. It is hoped that the discussions on issues pertaining to national implementation experiences as well as opportunities for regional cooperation and

assistance will serve to encourage signature, ratification and implementation of the Convention., My delegation hopes that renewed efforts will be made to increase and place at the forefront of our discourse the humanitarian impact of these indiscriminate and lethal weapons, in order to sustain the momentum towards this goal and the establishment of cluster-munition free-zones globally.

Mr. President,

Please be assured that Jamaica will continue to remain engaged in and supportive of the Convention on Cluster Munitions process, in pursuit of international security and the preservation of human life and well-being. In closing, I look forward to the deliberations on these pertinent issues, and wish for us a successful Meeting.

Thank you.