

Speech by Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Manuel A. González Sanz,
On the occasion of the inauguration of the
V Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
September 1st, 2014

Mr. President,
Ministers of Government,
Gentlemen of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguished National Authorities,
Distinguished Representatives of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster
Munitions, Observers, International Organizations and Civil Society,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin these brief opening remarks by extending a warm greeting by the Government of Costa Rica and our deepest appreciation for your attendance at this meeting.

We welcome you to the land of peace, of hope.

Just seven years ago, as we moved through the Oslo Process, we held, in San Jose, the *First Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on Cluster Munitions*.

At that time, with enthusiastic longing and by joining forces we built a great ideal:

a new international legally binding instrument that prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of these weapons with a high humanitarian cost, which is unacceptable.

Today, we welcome with great pleasure, and we are deeply honored that the States Parties to the Convention have designated Costa Rica as Presidency of the Fifth Meeting,

which is the first Meeting of States Parties to be held in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the last Meeting prior to the First Review Conference of the Convention in 2015.

We believe that our work is just beginning, since the use of these weapons in various countries still continues, and instead of destroying them, resources are allocated each year towards their proliferation.

That is why we have no choice but to raise our voices as one, the cry of a great majority for a world free of cluster munitions, in favor of peace, disarmament and the right to life.

On behalf of the Costa Rican Government, I thank the Government of Norway, and the United Nations Development Programme, for the support and trust provided,

in addition to recognizing the valuable work of the International Committee of the Red Cross and organized civil society for the fulfillment of this Fifth Meeting.

Thank you very much,