



**NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Convention on Cluster Munitions
5th Meeting of States Parties, San Jose, Costa Rica
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GENERAL STATEMENT

by

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Check against delivery

1. It is indeed a great and particular pleasure to congratulate you, Mr President, and Costa Rica with the election as President of this meeting and through the year leading up to the first Review Conference. It is most pertinent that Costa Rica has been elected President as Costa Rica has been at the forefront since the process on banning cluster munitions started, and has consistently stood up against any attempts to undermine the Convention and has actively supported the implementation of the Convention. We look forward to continue to working with Costa Rica and you can count on Norway's support during your Presidency.
2. Since the Convention was adopted six years ago, we have seen the establishment of a norm against use of cluster munitions that is widely respected. The unacceptable harm to civilians caused by the indiscriminate and wide area effect of cluster munitions is no longer an accepted and normal feature of armed conflict, even when states not party to the Convention are involved.
3. One of the prominent exception is of course Syria, a state not party to the CCM, and a State that in any case has demonstrated its willingness to commit systematic and flagrant violations of International Humanitarian Law.
4. Let me highlight some of the results achieved since the adoption of the CCM. More than 122 million stockpiled submunitions have been destroyed so far, and there are more to come. The know-how gained from the destruction programs will make additional stockpile destruction cheaper and faster than earlier anticipated.
5. Comprehensive cluster munitions remnants survey and clearance programs are in operation in all significantly affected States Parties.

Similar programs in affected states not party benefit massively from the insights and improvements made in state-party programs. Our understanding of the scope, magnitude and structure of the cluster remnants contamination problem has improved remarkably since the CCM was adopted, and we now look at years and decades rather than, as previously, centuries as our timeline.

6. The comprehensive and inclusive definition of victims and the provisions for victim assistance have contributed to the recognition of the victims and their needs. It has also shaped the broader discourse on how to ensure the rights for the victims of cluster munitions as well as other victims of war and armed violence.
7. So, in its first years the CCM has delivered what we intended it to do.
8. Challenges remain, but they are no longer of the global urgency and magnitude we were faced with at the start of the process. Apart from maintaining and upholding the norm against use, these challenges exist mainly at the national level in affected states, in contexts where political will is the crucial enabling or preventing factor. Therefore, it is questionable whether continued multilateral activities at the same level we have seen up to now, remains the answer to continued implementation progress.
9. The international humanitarian system for protecting civilians is under pressure, in particular in areas of high-intensity armed conflicts. In war zones in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, civilians are exposed to the use of arms with similar indiscriminate and wide area effects as cluster munitions have. Barrel bombs, car bombs, unguided Grad missiles, shelling of civilian infrastructure including schools, religious places and hospitals where civilians have sought sanctuary are all too familiar news stories these days.

10. The bleak picture we see today would have been even worse without the CCM, which strengthened the norms and the practice protecting civilians from certain effects of armed conflict. But we must not let the success of the Convention provide us with an excuse to not continue to address the precarious situations experienced by millions of civilians trapped in war zones. Rather, we need to identify the factors that made it possible for us as a community to develop a timely and relevant response to what was then a pressing humanitarian issue. Then we should use those insights to improve and intensify our efforts to preserve and reinforce the protection of civilians in armed conflict.
11. One of the reasons why Norway in late 2006 initiated the process that resulted in the CCM was a realization that the designated multilateral forum was not able to deliver an effective response to a well-documented humanitarian crisis, thus rendering itself irrelevant in the eyes of the world. The failure of the CCW to respond to the call to ban cluster munitions was both an affront to the affected states, communities and individuals, and a threat to the credibility of the CCW itself.
12. However, we should now be cognisant that CCM risks entering the same territory of substantial irrelevance and diplomatic etiquette where CCW got lost first in 1996, and then in 2006. And again in 2011, as some of you may recall.
13. More committees and large meetings in Geneva or other similar places will not solve the remaining problem caused by cluster munitions. The task now is to calibrate the allocation of resources, with the actual needs to fulfil the remaining obligations of the Convention fully anchored in the realities in the field. In the

financially and politically demanding years ahead of us, it is essential to select the right partners. *E g* it is important to distinguish between field-based, operational organisations that have demonstrated that they can deliver, and the less productive and relevant entities.

14. We will therefore caution against a development where more time and money are allocated towards centralised implementation support infrastructure and so-called coordination efforts at the multilateral level at the expense of concrete implementation actions.
15. This is particularly important given the pressing humanitarian needs in war zones similar in nature to those caused by cluster munitions, but caused by other weapons. As both humanitarian and development budgets are limited, and respect for IHL needs to be strengthened, we have to do all we can to ensure that the available intellectual and financial resources are spent where they have the most impact for civilians affected by armed conflict.
16. The fulfilment of the obligations, and honouring the partnerships, of the CCM is important for Norway. To do so, we will continue to prioritise bilateral cooperation, supporting tangible actions in affected areas. We will continue the cooperation with partners committed and competent to fulfil the remaining obligations of the convention, such as national authorities and humanitarian operators involved in actual survey, clearance, stockpile destruction, victim assistance and in efforts to defend the norm.
17. As coordinator for universalization, we will continue to prioritise engagement with affected states not parties to the Convention. In our analysis, the most important universalization work is to promote and defend the universal norm against use, continue the stigmatization of cluster munitions and demonstrate how accession to the CCM can

make a difference for affected states. The full implementation by States Parties of their obligations under the Convention is also important for supporting universalisation.

18. I am pleased to inform this meeting that Norway on 29 August this year submitted its Declaration of Compliance with the Convention's Art 4.1 (a) to the UN. By 9 September 2013 the Norwegian Armed Forces had finalised surveying the former test firing range at Hjerkins for cluster munition remnants. This means that Norway now has completed its obligations under CCM Art 4.1.
19. This is our last formal meeting before we meet at the first review conference next year. Let us take the opportunity to consider what kind of a program of work and a support structure that is required to meet the actual needs in affected areas, so we can fulfil our commitment, to end the harm caused by cluster munitions. Next year's Review Conference should make the necessary decisions on the future CCM machinery to this end.