



**Cluster Munition Coalition statement on Transparency
Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meeting
18 April 2012
Delivered by Tamar Gabelnick**

This is reporting season, and with less than 2 weeks left until the Convention's annual reports are due, the Cluster Munition Coalition would like to leave you with 5 short messages on transparency

- 1) Reporting is useful
- 2) Reporting is not complicated
- 3) Reports need to be on time
- 4) Reports need to be clear
- 5) Reports need to be comprehensive

First, we'd like to say a few words about the usefulness of reporting, both for the reporting state and other States Parties. Of course, reporting is first and foremost a legal obligation. But it also helps States Parties inform others on what Convention obligations apply to them, their progress in meeting them, and any challenges they face. States in need of international assistance will find that providing comprehensive information is an excellent way to communicate their accomplishments as well as their funding, technical or other gaps. Reporting also builds confidence among States Parties that each state is fully respecting its treaty obligations, including deadlines. Finally, clear, timely and comprehensive reporting helps ensure monitoring efforts – such as the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, as well as the annual Meeting of States Parties progress reports – are accurate.

Second, reporting need not be complicated. While the initial report needs to include information on every form (even just to confirm that the state has no relevant obligations), in future years, a simple cover sheet allows states to fill in only those forms where the situation has changed from the previous year. In addition, the information required by the Convention should be readily available to states as a natural part of its management of the issue in question, be it stockpile destruction, clearance, victim assistance or international cooperation. States can also facilitate reporting by using information they may already be collecting for related conventions, while still ensuring that all information required by the CCM is included. Other ways to make reporting easier include the reporting guidelines Belgium is

developing, the Word version of the reporting forms put online by ODA this week, as well as the potential online reporting system presented by ODA today.

Third, reports need to be submitted on time. The Convention requires initial reports to be turned in not later than 180 days after the entry into force of the Convention for that State Party. Yet only 70% of States Parties have met this key deadline. 16 States Parties (Antigua and Barbuda, Cape Verde, Chile, Comoros, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Fiji, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Panama, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, and Tunisia) are late in turning them in, some over a year late. If your state is one of them, we urge you to turn in your report without further delay. If you are from one of the 13 States Parties (Afghanistan, Botswana, Cook Islands, Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Honduras, Italy, Mauritania, Senegal, Swaziland, and Trinidad and Tobago) with upcoming initial report deadlines, please turn them in by the deadline, or even earlier.

Every year following submission of an initial report, States Parties must submit updates for the previous calendar year by 30 April. Such reports are required of all States Parties, even if they have no other outstanding treaty obligations. So far only six States Parties have submitted such updates for 2012. This is disturbingly low number with only 10 working days to go until they are due. We certainly hope that the reports come in at a high pace in the next two weeks.

Fourthly, states need to report clearly. One problem we have found with many initial reports is that States Parties did not clearly present their status relative to all convention obligations. Many states with no stockpiles or retained cluster munitions just left these forms blank or wrote only N/A. Instead, states should provide a clear statement that it has never had, or has no more, stockpiles, or that it is retaining no cluster munitions. The same is true for contamination and cluster munition victims, where there has been a lack of clarity about some states' status when small amounts of cluster munitions were thought to have been used in the past. In terms of information on clearance, VA and resources that cover multiple types of ERW, it would be useful if the state could include any information that can help clarify which elements relate mainly to CCM implementation.

Finally, reports need to be comprehensive. The Convention has a high standard for reporting, and the reporting forms closely parallel the Convention's detailed requirements. Additional elements of the forms come from the reporting commitments made in the Vientiane Action Plan. Yet States Parties are regularly leaving many boxes with required information empty, or providing minimal information only. The lack of information is particularly important on the status and progress of programmes for clearance or stockpile destruction, which is needed to show the states are on-track to meeting Convention deadlines. The sections on resources provided or needed are also not being used to their full potential. We would also like to encourage you to use the optional form to provide information on what you have done to implement the Convention's requirement to carry out universalization.

Thank you.