

**CMC statement on universalisation
27 June 2011**

Thank you Mr. President.

Since the First Meeting of States Parties in Vientiane, eleven states have ratified the Convention: [Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Lithuania, Mozambique, The Netherlands, Panama, and Portugal.] We would like to take this occasion to congratulate these countries, and other states that have already ratified the Convention.

We also welcome the recent progress that has been made by signatory states in order to ratify the convention in the near future and hope to see more ratifications prior to the Second Meeting of States Parties in Beirut, Lebanon. In particular, we would like to highlight recent progress in Afghanistan, where both chambers of Parliament have now approved ratification. We hope to see the instrument of ratification deposited in the very near future. We understand that the internal legislative procedures for ratification have also been completed in Cameroon, Czech Republic, Italy and Senegal, and depositing the ratification instruments in New York is the final step that now remains for these countries to be States Parties.

All signatory states should make ratification a national priority and aim to complete ratification before they come to the 2MSP in Beirut.

As we know, since the Convention entered into force on 1st August 2010, a state can no longer sign the Convention then ratify, but must now accede to the Convention. Regrettably, no country has acceded since entry into force. However, we have heard positive signals that this situation could change in the coming days. In particular, we are delighted to know that Grenada's instrument of accession has been sent to New York and should be deposited very soon, making it the first state to accede.

We were also informed that the Cabinet in Trinidad and Tobago has taken the decision to accede to the Convention. We hope that this movement is the start of full universalisation by Caribbean States. We have also been informed that accession process is under way in some other countries.

Despite these recent, positive developments on universalisation, this year has also seen the use of cluster munitions in two countries, the first instances – and hopefully the last – since entry into force. In Libya, government forces used cluster munitions and we also documented the use of cluster munitions by Thailand in Cambodia. These instances of use were publicly condemned by some States Parties, but we would like to see more States Parties condemning any use of cluster munitions by any actor, as the further stigmatisation of the weapon is essential to prevent new use in the future. We urge Libya and Thailand to immediately commit to no future use and to join the Convention as soon as possible.

[In the Libyan context, we appreciated that States Parties carried out their obligations under Article 21 to officially discourage the use of cluster munitions by members of the military coalition which are not Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as well as to urge them to join the Convention. We urge all States Parties to discourage any use of cluster munitions].

Those new occurrences of use sadly proved the necessity and urgency of universal adherence to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Although the impressive speed of the Oslo Process and the high number of signatory states to the Convention are proof of the strong commitment by the

international community to get rid of cluster munitions, more efforts need to be made so that every country becomes a State Party to the Convention.

We urge states that have not yet joined the Convention to do so as soon as possible, as we know from the experience of the Mine Ban Treaty that the best time to join is in the early years of the Convention. All countries should make it a priority to become part of the large group of states that have decided to reach the goal of a world free of cluster munitions, in order to stop the human suffering caused by these weapons. In particular, we urge Cambodia, as a country where cluster munitions have recently been used and as the host of the 11MSP of the Mine Ban Treaty, to accede to the Convention by the meeting in Phnom Penh.

All States Parties have an obligation under the Convention to promote universalization, as stipulated in Article 21, and all States Parties should carry out the universalisation actions contained in the Vientiane Action Plan. We commend the role that Japan has taken on as Friend of the President on universalisation, as well as actions carried out by Lao PDR, President of the Convention to promote the Convention to states in the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as by Lebanon, as President-designate to members of the Arab League.

We know several other States Parties have been active in issuing universalisation demarches, and we commend their efforts. Universalisation is not a costly task, but a vital one to ensure all countries get rid of cluster munitions. We believe *all* States Parties and signatories can contribute something to promote this Convention. Some states could engage in one-to-one military discussions with states that still hesitate to join because of military concerns, to show cluster munitions are not necessary to ensure their national security. Others could work with those concerned with clearance or stockpile destruction obligations to understand their concerns and help to identify solutions. Others could focus on making accession or ratification a national priority in non-States Parties.

Transparency and dialogue are the best ways to make sure all countries overcome their difficulties or concerns regarding joining the Convention and allow them to see the benefits for them and for populations worldwide to have all states inside the Convention.

The CMC has carried out a number of activities this year to promote the Convention to signatory and non-signatory countries. To name but a few – we participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in Panama in April and met with parliamentarians from around 70 countries to promote the Convention; together with a member of the European Parliament from Austria we have promoted the 2010 European Union resolution that calls on EU member states to join and implement the Convention as soon as possible; we have held briefings for states on the CCM in Geneva for government delegates, and we have written to and met with a number of states to promote ratification and accession.

At the national level, CMC member organizations active in around 100 countries worldwide, have continued to advocate for governments to ratify and accede to the Convention as a matter of priority. On 1 August this year the Cluster Munition Coalition will hold a global day of action to generate awareness of this Convention and the 2MSP in Beirut and will call on all states to « join the team » of countries that have joined the Convention. Coordinated action is most likely to lead to concrete and quick results, and collaboration with civil society has proven to be effective on a number of occasions. The CMC and its members all over the world are ready to work together with States Parties to ensure the crucial work on universalisation is undertaken and successful.