

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CCM COORDINATION COMMITTEE
held on Monday, 13 November 2023
in Conference Room 6A, Tower 3, Maison de la Paix
from 14:00 to 15:00 hours

1. Present:

Mexico – 12MSP President

H.E. Mrs. Francisca E. Méndez Escobar
Mr. Alonso Martínez
Ms. Mariana Roa

Austria

Ms. Lioba Bammer

Belgium

Mr. Vincent Bodson

Germany

Ms. Irmgard Adam

Lebanon

Mr. Ahmad Soueidan

Italy

Ms. Elena Gai

Malawi

Ms. Tiyamike Banda

Netherlands

Ms. Henriëtte van Gulik

Pamama

Ms. Grisselle Rodriguez

Peru

Mr. Angel Horna

Switzerland

Ms. Silvia Greve

Zambia

Ms. Chileshe Nkole

CMC

Ms. Kasia Derlicka-Rosenbauer

ICRC

Ms. Sophie Timmermans

UNODA

Ms. Alice Marzi

ISU

Ms. Pamela Moraga
Mr. Emad Al-Juhaishi
Ms. Elaine Weiss

Apologies received:

Australia
Iraq
Norway

2. Opening Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda

Ambassador Francisca E. Méndez Escobar, President of the 12th Meeting of States Parties (12MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), opened the first Coordination Committee Meeting under the Mexican Presidency by extending a warm welcome to all its members. She expressed deep honour for her delegation to preside over the work of the Convention up to the conclusion of the 12MSP in September 2024. Ambassador Méndez also acknowledged and commended the outstanding efforts by the 11MSP Iraqi Presidency. She conveyed her team's commitment to continuing this vital work in the most effective manner possible.

The President outlined her collaborative efforts with the ISU Director, Coordinators, international organizations, civil society, and the mine action community to define the priorities of the Mexican Presidency. Emphasizing the inclusive nature of this process, she stressed the importance of ensuring the Convention's robust implementation on the ground. She underscored the importance of civil society experts' willingness to work with her team to achieve concrete deliverables.

Ambassador Méndez informed that Mexico's priority in taking up the presidency of the CCM was based on its earnest desire to renew the foundational humanitarian ethos that underpins the Convention's principles. She highlighted that with the Convention being over a decade old, it was time to reinvigorate high-level support to propel it further. Emphasizing the goal of working towards its full implementation, the President reiterated the need for sustained dedication and collective action.

The Committee proceeded to approve the provisional agenda of the meeting as presented by the presidency.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Coordination Committee Meetings

The Committee also reviewed and approved the minutes of the Coordination Committee Meetings held on 14 August and 4 September 2023.

4. Presentation of the Priorities of the Mexican Presidency up to the 12MSP

The President expressed the strong commitment of the presidency team to foster close collaboration with the Coordination Committee members, acknowledging their pivotal roles in steering the Convention's efforts. She eagerly anticipated listening to the diverse ideas and proposals from each working group and stressed the significance of exploring synergies among these groups to boost the Convention's implementation. She pointed out that close cooperation would also ensure that clear and concrete deliverables would be achieved in the lead up to the 12MSP.

The President underscored the fundamental importance of including gender and diversity considerations across all thematic areas. She invited the Coordinators to introduce their priorities for the year and gently reminded them of the deadline of 30 November to submit their work plans.

5. Preparation of Thematic Work Plans of Each Working Group

5.1 Universalization (Malawi and Peru)

Malawi reported that the Universalization Coordinators had been in the process of finalizing their work plan and had not conducted substantial activities as of the meeting. The Coordinators had planned bilateral consultations with capital-based representatives of targeted States not yet party to the CCM during the 21st Meeting of States Parties (21MSP) of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) the following week. Assurances were given by Malawi that the Coordinators would be submitting their work plan in the near future.

5.2 Stockpile Destruction (Netherlands and Zambia)

The Netherlands expressed gratitude to the President for hosting the welcome lunch the previous week. It reported that the Stockpile Destruction Coordinators had not yet submitted their work plan but assured that it would be provided shortly. The Netherlands highlighted that the Coordinators would collaborate with Peru to support its preparation to declare the completion of its stockpile destruction by the deadline.

Regarding South Africa, the Netherlands suggested reaching out to the delegation to organize a ceremony at the 12MSP to commemorate its declaration of completion of its cluster munition stockpile destruction process. The Coordinators were of the view that such gestures showcased the dedication of States Parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention.

The Netherlands conveyed that the Coordinators would include reflections on particular issues concerning Article 3 implementation within their work plan, with the intention to draft a working document(s) based on their analyses.

Additionally, the Netherlands highlighted its role as a Gender Focal Point of the APMBC, indicating the coordinators' commitment to apply a gender lens and encouraged others to do so also.

5.3 Victim Assistance (Austria and Panama)

The Mexican Ambassador recalled that former Victim Assistance (VA) Coordinators, Chile and Mexico, had initiated the process of revising the VA guidelines to align them with the Lausanne Action Plan (LAP). She conveyed her hope that the guidelines would be finalized by the current VA Working Group and presented at the 12MSP.

Austria extended its gratitude to the President for hosting the welcome lunch the previous week. In its update, Austria revealed that the VA Coordinators had convened to discuss their work plan and had met with the ISU Director on this matter. Aligning with the President's earlier reference, Austria emphasized that the Coordinators' primary focus would be on updating the *"Guidance on an Integrated Approach to Victim Assistance"* for it to be consistent with the LAP. The Coordinators planned to meet again to deliberate on how best to approach this task and to finalize their work plan for submission by the end of the month.

Panama added to Austria's update by reaffirming that Coordinators' strong commitment to effectively revise the VA guidelines. Panama indicated that the Coordinators were eager to advance this crucial work.

5.4 International Cooperation and Assistance (Lebanon and Switzerland)

Lebanon informed that the priority of the Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance was to promote the establishment of country coalitions to advance the implementation of the Convention. Lebanon assured that the Coordinators would present their work plan soon and that they were keenly anticipating fruitful cooperation with other members of the Coordination Committee.

Switzerland, in adding to the update, indicated that it was in discussions with Lebanon on the formulation and execution of their work plan.

5.5 Clearance and Risk Education (Italy and Norway)

The representative of Italy reported that she had just returned from participating in the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee in New York. Italy informed that the Coordinators on Clearance and Risk Education would be meeting to deliberate on the thematic area's priorities within the broader objectives of the Convention.

5.6 General Status and Operation (Belgium and Germany)

Germany provided an update stating that the Coordinators on the General Status and Operation of the Convention had recently met with the ISU Director to discuss the formulation of their work plan. Germany elaborated that the Coordinators intended to concentrate on strengthening collaboration with the Coordination Committee to streamline gender and diversity considerations across all thematic areas of the Convention, aiming for greater coherence and inclusivity, and engaging in collaborative efforts with other humanitarian disarmament Conventions, such as the APMBC, with the aim of fostering synergies and shared best practices across these spheres of humanitarian efforts.

Germany further conveyed that in their role as CCM Gender Focal Points, the Coordinators were exploring potential avenues for collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to enhance the incorporation of gender perspectives in the work of the Convention.

Belgium contributed to the discussion by highlighting the complexity of integrating gender considerations into the thematic areas of the CCM, despite the mandate given to the Coordinators on the General Status and Operation by the Second Review Conference (2RC) to serve as Gender Focal Points. Belgium emphasized the need to enhance the visibility of gender issues within the Convention by potentially institutionalizing these dedicated offices. Belgium raised the uncertainty regarding the continuity of these roles after the 3RC. To address this, Belgium proposed seeking the agreement of States Parties to formalize this role, drawing parallels with the structures established within the APMBC and the Arms Trade

Treaty (ATT). To that end, Belgium suggested documenting this as a decision for consideration at an upcoming MSP or Review Conference.

The Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) acknowledged the President's indication that civil society were experts and valuable partners ready to engage with States Parties to enhance the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, the CMC reiterated its commitment and willingness to collaborate closely with the Coordinators to advance the objectives of the Convention.

The CMC highlighted the substantial tasks at hand, particularly in response to concerning developments outlined in reports by the Cluster Munition Monitor and Human Rights Watch. The CMC specifically referred to the recent cluster munition use in Syria by Syrian and Russian Forces. It reaffirmed its commitment to collaborate with States Parties to safeguard the core principles and norms of the Convention.

The CMC shared that it was its 20th anniversary on that day, tracing its establishment to 13 November 2003 in the Hague. To mark the upcoming 15th anniversary of the signature of the CCM in early December, the CMC outlined plans for a collective action targeting outstanding Signatory States that have yet to ratify the Convention. The CMC intended to send letters to the Permanent Missions of these States and invited the Coordination Committee to participate in outreach initiatives to these States. It encouraged "the different actors to knock on the same doors" signifying concerted efforts to create a cascade effect, with the aim of multiple ratifications. With the objective of achieving five more new States Parties by the next Review Conference, the CMC stressed that more countries joining the ban on cluster munitions would reinforce the message that these weapons have no right to exist.

While recognizing the critical importance of mitigative implementation measures like stockpile destruction and clearance, the CMC underscored that a primary objective of the Convention was to prevent the future use of cluster munitions in armed conflicts. Therefore, expanding international commitments to the Convention was essential. In conclusion, the CMC restated its willingness to support the Coordinators' realization of their work plans.

In response, Peru congratulated the CMC on its 20-year anniversary milestone. It assured that the Universalization Coordinators would reach out to the CMC to further discuss plans related to the anniversary of the Convention's signing, as well as to present their draft work plan. Moreover, Peru reaffirmed the unwavering support of the Universalization Coordinators for the CMC's initiatives and efforts.

The ISU Director reaffirmed her commitment to meet with the Coordinators to provide guidance and support for their endeavours. In reference to the President's mention of working documents, she highlighted their role in taking stock of the achievements of the Convention and strengthening its ongoing implementation.

Drawing attention to the challenging global security landscape, she underscored the imperative for the CCM community to intensify its efforts and actively participate in critical discussions. She emphasized the historical significance of the prolonged negotiations that culminated in humanitarian disarmament Conventions, emphasizing the paramount

importance of safeguarding these established norms. She stressed the need to uphold the relevance and robustness of the Convention, particularly in the current international security context.

6. Update by the ISU

6.1 Meetings with States in the Sidelines of the 11MSP

The ISU Director underscored that the 11MSP was a sound success on many fronts. She highlighted that the ISU had also utilized the Meeting as an opportunity to engage with States Parties intending to present extension requests in the near future. Additionally, the ISU proactively addressed concerns raised by States. The ISU Director proceeded to provide an overview of some of these engagements:

Zambia: The ISU met with delegation of Zambia to address its national implementation measures. Zambia had informed that it was considering either drafting new legislation or reviewing and amending its existing legislation to implement the CCM. In offering support to this initiative, the ISU facilitated communication between Zambia and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This collaborative effort aims to assist Zambia in establishing effective measures to implement the Convention.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): During the 11MSP, the DRC representative made a public appeal twice and emphasized that in order to facilitate and accelerate the ratification process, three national workshops with an estimated total cost of US\$150,000 had to be organized. In order to gain clarity on the proposed three workshops, the ISU requested to meet with the DRC representative the last day of the MSP and extended an invitation to the ICRC. During the meeting, the DRC representative elaborated that the intention behind organizing these workshops was to convene national stakeholders, including security forces, parliamentarians, and other relevant parties involved in ratifying the CCM. He considered these workshops as instrumental in facilitating the DRC's ratification of the Convention and part of the domestic legal requirements to accede to any convention. He further informed that he had held bilateral discussions with the representatives of Belgium and the United Kingdom, and that both countries had expressed a favourable interest in these workshops. Both the ISU and the ICRC affirmed their commitment to offer technical support for the ratification process. However, the ISU clarified that it was in no position to guarantee funding for these workshops.

Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR): The ISU convened with the delegation of Lao PDR to discuss its Article 4 implementation and the submission of its second extension request. The Lao delegation presented an overview of the existing contamination situation, and the progress achieved, and challenges faced in its clearance operations. Additionally, Lao PDR provided insights into its available resources and their potential utilization, as well as the necessary resources required to enhance the survey and clearance of cluster munition remnants. The ISU communicated the requisite information to be included in the extension request.

Of particular note, the Lao delegation sought guidance on reporting the environmental implications within the context of their extension request. The ISU Director clarified that this presented an opportunity to establish guidelines on this matter, noting that the Convention presently lacked defined protocols in this area.

6.2 Follow up with States Expected to Submit Article 4 Extension Requests

In addition to Lao PDR, the ISU Director highlighted engagements with Chad and Germany concerning their impending extension request submissions.

Germany: The ISU Director expressed confidence that Germany would be providing its request in the near future.

Chad: The Director reported that in the case of Chad, there was still a lack of concrete information on the extent of its remaining cluster munition contamination. She added that Chad had conveyed that it was in the process of forming a committee to formulate the request and anticipated presenting a draft by the end of the month.

6.3 Article 3 Implementation

South Africa: The ISU Director proceeded to update the meeting by noting that following South Africa's announcement of successful completion of its cluster munition destruction process at the 11MSP, it submitted its Article 3 Declaration of Compliance on 29 September 2023. She highlighted that the ISU had promptly uploaded the declaration onto the CCM website attached to South Africa's country profile.

Peru: Additionally, in line with prior discussions during the meeting, the Director pointed out that Peru was the only State Party with an Article 3 deadline and was expected to fulfil its obligations by April 2024.

6.4 ISU Support to Coordination Committee Members

The ISU Director reported that she had met with several members of the Coordination Committee to discuss their priorities and forthcoming plans related to their specific thematic areas leading up to the 12MSP. She reiterated to the Coordinators that the deadline for submitting their work plans was 30 November, emphasizing her availability and willingness to address any enquiries or concerns they might have regarding their plans. She assured them that her door was always open for further discussion or clarification on the matter.

6.5 2023 CCM Resolution

The ISU Director informed that the draft Resolution on the Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was adopted at the UN General Assembly First Committee on 1 November. Notably, there was a slight decrease in votes compared to the previous year's tally. The voting results for 2023 included 139 Yes votes, 1 No vote, 35 Abstentions, and 18 Absentees, whereas the results for 2022 had 145 Yes votes, 1 No vote, 35 Abstentions, and 13 Absentees. Remarkably, among the 18 States absent in 2023, 13 of them had previously

voted in favour. Consequently, the ISU took proactive measures, reaching out directly to all these States to urge their participation in the forthcoming General Assembly vote scheduled for the first week of December.

6.6 ISU Finances

The ISU Director reported that since the 11MSP, five (5) States Parties made contributions to the ISU's 2023 budget. Additionally, one (1) State Party requested a reimbursement due to the underspending of an earmarked fund. Therefore, the total number of contributing States for 2023 stands at 53, contributing to 90% of the annual budget.

She pointed out that the ISU expenditure for that year was anticipated to slightly exceed the annual budget. This was partly attributed to underestimated relocation expenses, as the budget drafted prior to the 2RC did not account for the departure of the former Director.

To conclude her update, the ISU Director conveyed her keen interest in supporting the efforts of the CMC in their outreach to the remaining Signatory States.

Regarding the meeting involving the delegate from the DRC, Belgium shared insights into its engagement with the DRC. Belgium conveyed that the representative was the newly appointed National Coordinator for the Congolese Mine Action Centre (CCLAM). Belgium clarified that it had not made commitments to fund the proposed workshops. Belgium highlighted that it had previously collaborated with the former CCLAM National Coordinator and was less acquainted with the incumbent replacement. Belgium expressed its intention to gather more information to better understand the context surrounding these workshops and the DRC's ratification process. Moreover, considering the forthcoming Congolese presidential elections in December 2023, Belgium expressed a preference to engage with the DRC representative in 2024 post-elections. The representative from Belgium mentioned consulting with his colleagues in Geneva and Kinshasa, as well as his counterpart from the United Kingdom, and reported that all of them agreed on the complexity of the DRC's request.

The CMC also reported its engagement with the DRC representative concerning the issue at hand. It conveyed the surprise of its Congolese campaigners upon learning about the DRC's request for funds to organize the three workshops. According to the campaigners, the ratification process was already in progress. The CMC welcomed the involvement of Belgium, the ISU and the ICRC in discussions with the DRC. Furthermore, the CMC expressed its intentions to meet with the DRC delegate in the margins of the 21MSP of the APMBC the following week to seek further insights into the developments regarding the DRC's ratification process. The CMC highlighted that it would suggest that the DRC expedite ratification and subsequently seek international cooperation and assistance for effective implementation of the Convention on the ground.

7. Conclusion of the Meeting

In closing, Ambassador Méndez extended her gratitude to all attendees for their valuable contributions and active participation in the constructive discussions held during the meeting. She reiterated the importance of the upcoming deadline of 30 November for the submission

of work plans by the Coordinators. She informed that the date and details of the next meeting would be communicated by the ISU closer to the date.
