



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CCM COORDINATION COMMITTEE**  
**held on Monday, 14 August 2023**  
**in Conference Room 6A, Tower 3, Maison de la Paix**  
**from 14:00 to 15:30 hours**

**1. Present:**

Republic of Iraq – 11MSP President

H.E. Mr. Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa  
Ms. Raghad Hasan

Mexico – President-Designate (12MSP)

H.E. Mrs. Francisca Méndez  
Mr. Alonso Martinez

United Kingdom – Immediate Past President  
(10MSP)

Ms. Eleonora Sagesse

Austria

Mr. Andreas Bilgeri

Belgium

Mr. Vincent Bodson

Bulgaria

Mr. Nikola Yakov

France

Mr. Octave Vasseur-Bendel

Gambia

Ms. Baturu Camara

Germany

Ms. Irmgard Adam

Guyana

Mr. Colin Luckie

Malawi

Ms. Tiyamike Banda

Netherlands

Ms. Henriëtte van Gulik

New Zealand

Mr. Nicholas Clutterbuck

Norway

Mr. Fredrik Laache

CMC

Ms. Tamar Gabelnick

ICRC

Ms. Eirini Giorgou

UNODA

Ms. Silvia Mercogliano  
Ms. Alice Marzi

ISU

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

Apologies not received:

Chile  
Lebanon  
Spain

## **2. Opening Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda**

The President of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (11MSP), Ambassador Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa, extended a warm welcome to the members of the Coordination Committee. He noted that this was the seventh meeting under the Iraqi Presidency and potentially the final one before the 11MSP. He expressed his pleasure at the recent accession of South Sudan to the Convention, increasing the total number of CCM States Parties to 112. Ambassador Mostafa highlighted that during the 11MSP presidency cycle, the Convention had gained two new States Parties: Nigeria and South Sudan. The Committee then proceeded to approve the provisional agenda of the meeting as presented by the presidency.

## **3. Approval of Previous Coordination Committee Meeting Minutes**

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes of the Coordination Committee Meeting held on 5 June 2023. The minutes were accepted without any corrections as they accurately reflected the discussions of that meeting.

## **4. Preparations for the 11MSP**

The President reiterated that the 11MSP was scheduled to take place on 11-14 September 2023 in Room XIX of the Palais des Nations. He pointed out that he would be handing over the Convention's presidency to H.E. Mrs. Francisca Méndez at the conclusion of the 11MSP.

Furthermore, since the previous meeting, several documents that had been submitted to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) as 11MSP official documents had been made available online. These included the provisional agenda and annotated programme of work. The President reported that an informational letter regarding the 11MSP, along with the side event registration form, had been circulated to all States, international organizations and civil society organizations by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU).

The President provided a brief overview of the provisional agenda for the MSP. He conveyed that the Meeting would officially begin on Monday, 11 September, at 10 am. Initial proceedings included several procedural matters. This would be followed by a general exchange of views to allow States Parties, Signatories, States not Parties, international organizations and civil society organizations to share their perspectives on the Convention.

Thereafter, attention would be given to the presentation of extension requests, including those submitted by Iraq and Mauritania under Article 4. The remaining sessions would be dedicated to substantive issues such as the decisions concerning extension requests, the adoption of the revised Article 7 reporting template, and the election of office holders for the Coordination Committee to serve up to the 12MSP.

Regarding the latter topic, Ambassador Mostafa provided an updated on the status of the Committee leading up to the 12MSP at that time. He clarified that incoming Coordinators had been confirmed for the following positions:

- Peru would replace Spain as Universalization Co-Coordinator and work with Malawi;
- Zambia would replace Bulgaria as Stockpile Destruction Co-Coordinator and work with the Netherlands;
- Switzerland would replace Germany as International Cooperation and Assistance Co-Coordinator and work with Lebanon; and
- Australia would replace The Gambia as Transparency Measures Coordinator for a renewable term of one year.

Therefore, the remaining vacancies were as follows:

- Gender Focal Point/General Status and Operation Co-Coordinator, to replace France to work with Belgium;
- Clearance and Risk Education Co-Coordinator, to replace Guyana and work with Norway;
- Victim Assistance Co-Coordinator, to replace Chile and work with Austria; and
- National Implementation Measures Coordinator, to replace New Zealand for a renewable term of one year.

The President enquired whether these vacancies had to be filled before or during the 11MSP. In response, the ISU Director stated that it would be preferable to have them filled prior to the MSP so that the new Coordination Committee could promptly carry out their mandates following the 11MSP.

## **5. Implementation of Article 3 Obligations by South Africa**

Ambassador Mostafa informed that on 23 June, South Africa submitted its overdue Article 7 annual reports for the years 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. In its 2022 report, South Africa declared its possession of 1,485 cluster munitions and 99,065 submunitions. These figures had remained unchanged since its initial report. Given this information, it would be reasonable to expect South Africa to submit a request to extend its stockpile destruction deadline of 1 November 2023. However, no such request had been provided at that time. The President opened the floor for discussion on how to address this issue in the lead up to the 11MSP.

A summary of the comprehensive discussions on the matter is as follows:

### **Diplomatic efforts and proposed next steps:**

Ambassador Méndez of Mexico conveyed her recent meeting with the Permanent Representative of South Africa in Geneva. She indicated his commitment to resolving the issue appropriately. Mexico suggested promptly arranging a meeting during the week with the Permanent Representative of South Africa and the troika of CCM presidencies. They also proposed a similar démarche in Pretoria ahead of the 11MSP.

The Netherlands expressed support for Mexico's proposition. The Netherlands recommended informing the Permanent Representative of South Africa about the démarche intention of the

troika of presidencies in Pretoria. The United Kingdom expressed willingness to join such a meeting as part of the troika of CCM presidencies.

Similarly, Austria echoed the importance of reaching out to the South African government representatives in both Geneva and Pretoria. It expanded on the idea that involving more States Parties in the intervention process would be more effective. Austria underscored that démarches conducted in national capitals typically yield better results. In response, Mexico noted that informing the South African Permanent Representative of the démarche intention in Pretoria would serve as a diplomatic gesture.

Malawi suggested the issuance of a Note Verbale to South Africa clarifying the compliance issue under Article 3 that required urgent attention. The United Kingdom supported this proposal, underlining that the Note Verbale should complement, not replace, a meeting with the South African Permanent Representative. Germany also endorsed the notion of issuing a Note Verbale to South Africa to provide clarity on the actions required for CCM Article 3 compliance.

In addition to the previous suggestions, Mexico proposed to hold an additional Coordination Committee Meeting before the 11MSP with a specific focus on addressing this issue.

#### South Africa's compliance status with the Convention:

With its recent submission of annual transparency reports, South Africa was in compliance with its CCM's Article 7 obligations. However, concerns were raised about its compliance with Article 3. It was clarified that while South Africa's Article 3 deadline was 1 November 2023, the deadline for submitting an Article 3 extension request was December 2022, "nine months prior to the Meeting of States Parties a which is it to be considered". At that point in time, no such request had been provided. Therefore, clarity was urgently needed from South Africa on whether it intended to complete stockpile destruction by 1 November or submit an extension request.

#### Preparation for potential non-compliance of South Africa:

The Netherlands cautioned against the possibility of South Africa's non-compliance leading to heated discussions at the 11MSP and potential negative impacts on the Convention. The Netherlands emphasized the importance of resolving this issue before the MSP and reminded that the Article 3 Analysis Group, of which the Netherlands was a member, would need to prepare a decision on the request if South Africa opted for an extension.

Belgium underscored that non-compliance could lead to invoking Article 8 of the CCM, where one or more States Parties could submit a Request for Clarification. Belgium pointed out that South Africa should be reminded that this process might be initiated if it did not submit an extension request. In response, the President expressed a preference to avoid triggering a non-compliance discussion.

Austria highlighted the significance of considering the Convention's integrity and the potential establishment of a negative precedent in the consideration of any intervention.

Mexico emphasized the potential consequences of South Africa's non-compliance on the Convention, particularly in the context of ongoing USA - Ukraine cluster munition transfers. It urged for either an urgent stockpile destruction or the submission of an extension request to prevent a non-compliance situation.

#### Possible support to provide South Africa:

The Director of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) stressed the need to assist South Africa in meeting its Article 3 obligations by suggesting that it present a simple interim extension request at the 11MSP that could be prepared with support from the ISU. Given South Africa's insistence that the deadline would be met, the request could signal their intention to comply by their deadline while seeking an additional year in case the destruction took longer than planned. In response, the President proposed issuing a Note Verbale to South Africa to underscore the significance of the provision of an extension request to be considered at the 11MSP.

The United Kingdom emphasized that assisting South Africa is a demonstration of CCM States Parties' commitment to supporting the Convention's implementation. The United Kingdom called for speedy action, given the time constraints.

Belgium voiced support for a "technical" extension request from South Africa, pending a comprehensive request the following year. This would signify South Africa's good faith and willingness to engage with the CCM community. Belgium cited Article 8.1 of the Convention, which emphasizes the "spirit of cooperation".

Austria expressed support for flexibility and finding ways to assist states in fulfilling their obligations. It also highlighted the value of diplomatic outreach in national capitals and collaboration with other states.

In contribution to the discussion, UNODA expressed gratitude to the Coordination Committee members for their commitment to upholding the Convention's spirit during these challenging times facing disarmament negotiations. UNODA expressed its readiness to support and facilitate any efforts in this regard.

In conclusion, the President encouraged Mexico to continue personal engagement with the Permanent Representative of South Africa. He assured that he would simultaneously formally request a meeting with South Africa as soon as possible.

## **6. Updates by Thematic Coordinators**

The President invited the thematic Coordinators to report on progress in the implementation of their work plans up to the 11MSP.

### 6.1 Universalization (Malawi and Spain)

Malawi informed that the update by the Universalization Coordinators at the 11MSP would focus on achievements and activities conducted throughout the year. It also expressed a warm welcome the accession of South Sudan to the CCM. Malawi highlighted that the Coordinators had organized a meeting of the Informal Working Group (IWG) on Universalization on 19 June. The purpose of the meeting was to deliberate and brainstorm strategies to advance CCM universalization efforts. During the event, several States Parties had presented their upcoming plans related to CCM universalization. Additionally, a presentation on the universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) had contributed valuable insights to the discussions. The CCM Universalization Coordinators also shared the actions they were undertaking in the lead up to the 11MSP. Malawi extended gratitude to all participants who contributed to the success of the IWG meeting.

### 6.2 Victim Assistance (Austria and Chile)

Austria reported that the Victim Assistance Coordinators had resumed collaboration with civil society organizations to revise the VA guidelines. Despite the change in delegates of both coordinating countries, the project would persist and regular updates on its progress would be shared with the ISU.

### 6.3 Transparency Measures (The Gambia)

The Gambia was pleased to inform that the amended Article 7 reporting forms had been officially submitted and would be considered at the 11MSP. The Gambia conveyed its appreciation to the 11MSP presidency and the ISU for their unwavering support throughout the project. It also thanked the participating States Parties and civil society organizations for their valuable contributions to discussions and enhancements of the reporting template. Notably, a significant addition was the introduction of a new Form J on gender and diversity of populations. The Gambia additionally communicated the possibility to continue to hold bilateral meetings to discuss adjustments to the reporting forms in the lead up to the 11MSP. It expressed its hope that the updated reporting template would be adopted at the MSP.

Regarding the eight States Parties with overdue initial transparency report, The Gambia shared that one country had recently submitted its initial report. The Gambia expressed its commitment to redouble efforts to engage with the remaining States, with the aim to increase the submission of initial reports ahead of the 11MSP.

### 6.4 General Status and Operation (Belgium and France)

Belgium conveyed that there were no notable updates since the previous meeting. The Coordinators were in the process of identifying a new Co-Coordinator before the 11MSP to replace France.

## **7. Update by UNODA**

UNODA indicated that due to lower-than-anticipated volume of documents for the 11MSP, there were no foreseen financial challenges associated with the Meeting. Additionally, a dedicated web page for the Rules of Procedure, linked to the UNODA 11MSP website, was created to reduce documentation processing expenses. Nevertheless, there was sufficient funding to publish the Rules of Procedure, estimated at approximately USD 600, if required.

UNODA encouraged all individuals interested in participating in the 11MSP to complete their registration via Indico. UNODA informed that the registration process had already commenced and the vetting procedure for organizations not included in the pre-approved observer list would be initiated. It clarified that the final list of organizations to be approved would be submitted to the President for review during the plenary session. At that stage, only two organizations—Mines Action Canada and the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR) at James Madison University—requiring approval had registered. UNODA stated that these two entities were regular participants in CCM MSPs, which it expected would simplify the approval process.

Furthermore, UNODA communicated the availability of Room XXII for 11MSP side events, which could also be used for Coordination Committee meetings in the margins of the MSP. Two floors of office spaces were also designated for the 11MSP organizing teams.

## **8. Update by the ISU**

### **8.1 Financing of the ISU**

The ISU Director indicated that, since the last update, an additional six States had contributed, resulting in a total of 41 contributing States Parties to the ISU 2023 budget. The received amount was just below CHF 355,800 which covered approximately 69% of the annual budget. She urged States Parties yet to make their contributions to do so promptly to ensure the ISU's smooth operational continuity.

On 23 June, the ISU circulated the 2022 audit reports of its financial accounts to all States Parties. The reports demonstrated no irregularities and were deemed to be compliant with Swiss Law by the independent external auditors, Mazars SA.

### **8.2 11MSP Documentation**

The Director conveyed that all expected documents had been submitted for processing, except for the analysis of South Africa's extension request, if it was required. Up to that point, the provisional agenda, annotated programme of work, the ISU 2022 annual report, the ISU 2023 work plan and budget, and the analysis of Iraq's extension request had been uploaded to the UNODA website. The analysis of Mauritania's extension request would be made available shortly.

In addition, she encouraged delegates to regularly check the CCM and UNODA websites for updates and documents in preparation for the MSP.

### 8.3 ISU Support to CCM Implementation by States Parties

The ISU Director informed that the ISU had recently engaged with Bulgaria, Peru, Slovakia, and South Africa regarding their Article 3 obligations. Notably, Bulgaria reported to be in the process of finalizing its certificates of destruction. Peru reiterated its commitment to meet its stockpile destruction deadline. Slovakia confirmed it was on track to fulfil its obligations by the 11MSP.

The ISU had also followed up with Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Mauritania, and Somalia on their Article 4 obligations. Regarding Afghanistan, the ISU had received informal information about the discovery of a sizeable amount of previously unknown contamination that year. However, that information was pending official confirmation from its national mine action authorities. Bosnia and Herzegovina confirmed the previous week that it was on track to meet its clearance deadline of 1 September 2023.

The Director mentioned that the details on the implementation of the other States would be circulated to the Coordination Committee in the near future.

### 8.4 11MSP Sponsorship Programme

On 6 and 7 July, invitations were sent to the 29 States on the list that was approved during the previous CC meeting. Bulgaria had subsequently informed that it would not require sponsorship for its representative from capital to attend the MSP.

Out of the invited States, 17 had responded and formally requested sponsorship. It is noteworthy that Bosnia and Herzegovina and South Sudan had each requested sponsorship for two representatives. Additionally, two State Parties not included in the list—Palau and Sri Lanka—had written to seek sponsorship.

### 8.5 US Decision to Transfer Cluster Munitions to Ukraine

On 7 July, the US government officially announced its intention to provide cluster munitions to Ukraine in its efforts to defend itself against the Russian invasion of its territory. The ISU expressed its profound regret over this decision on social media and had also retweeted the posts of States that had spoken up regarding this matter of grave concern.

## 9. Any Other Business

### 9.1 Extraordinary Coordination Committee Meeting

Ambassador Méndez reiterated the idea of holding an additional Coordination Committee meeting before the 11MSP to further discuss the matter South Africa's Article 3 implementation and how it would be addressed at the 11MSP. The Netherlands expressed its support for this extra Coordination Committee meeting, emphasizing the necessity for clarity on the course of action to be taken at the MSP. Austria also supported this idea.



Ambassador Mostafa indicated that the decision for an extraordinary meeting would depend on the outcome of the démarche with the South African government. However, he anticipated convening a meeting of this nature in early September.

## 9.2 Cluster Munition Monitor 2023

The CMC Director announced that the launch of the 2023 Cluster Munition Monitor was scheduled for 5 September and that its findings would be under embargo until that date. Furthermore, the delegate briefing for the publication would be held on 11 September in the sidelines of the 11MSP.

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