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## **Santiago Regional Conference on Cluster Munitions**

### ***Towards a cluster munition free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean***

#### **Opening Session**

#### **Statement by Mr. Antonio Molpeceres, Resident Representative of the United Nations**

**12 December 2013**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

On behalf of the United Nations in Chile, I'm pleased to extend a warm welcome to you all. It is a great privilege for me to participate in the opening ceremony of this regional conference dedicated to this very important and achievable objective, a cluster munitions free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the outset, I would like to thank the government of Chile for hosting this regional conference. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to the Cluster Munitions Coalition (CMC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as the two Coordinators on Universalization and National implementation measures for their presence, involvement and tireless efforts to rid the world of cluster munitions.

UNDP puts people at the core of its involvement and as such support all sorts of initiatives, such as this one today, aimed at improving the effective protection of civilians, building

resilience and sustainable development and ensuring that weapons such as the cluster bombs, will never be used again.

We believe that the CCM is the best format to achieve this goal. Five years on from the Signing Conference of the Convention in Oslo on 3 December 2008, more than half the world's nations have already joined the treaty, establishing a norm and powerful global stigma against the use of this indiscriminate weapon (i.e. more than 123 states, parties or not to the CCM, spoke out against use of the weapon against civilians in 2012 and 2013 by Syrian Government forces).

This regional conference is the result of a strong commitment of Chile in support of the CCM and the total eradication of cluster munitions.

Hosting the 4<sup>th</sup> regional meeting on cluster munitions for Latin America and the Caribbean on September 2009, as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> international meeting on cluster bombs since the signature of the treaty, which gathered more than 80 governments in June 2010, Chile has been a strong participant supporter of the Oslo Process that led to the signature of the CCM and has since continuously been active in the work of the Convention.

More recently, Chile expressed again its commitment to the work taking on the role of Coordinator for Cooperation and Assistance until 2015.

We would like to congratulate Chile for its efforts in drafting and discussing the Santiago Declaration as well as the Santiago Action Plan towards a cluster-munitions free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We hope that these documents, emphasizing that *“the participants (...) undertake not to use under any circumstances, and call on all actors to immediately cease the use of, cluster munitions, urging all States to consider the possibility of acceding to or ratifying the relevant international instruments;”* as well as that the participants undertake *“To promote the establishment of networks of governmental experts to facilitate the promotion and coordination of efforts aimed at implementing and universalizing the CCM carrying out the Santiago Plan of Action and achieving a total ban on cluster munitions and their elimination, including the destruction of existing stockpiles”* will find an agreement among states attending the regional conference and will have a significant impact in the number of states joining the CCM.

Among the states attending the regional conference today, [15] are States parties, [4] are signatories and [3] are States not yet parties.

We hope that this regional conference will allow signatories to take the last steps in finalizing their processes of ratification, that States parties elaborate on strong national

implementation measures respecting the letter and spirit of the CCM and that States not yet party work on a ban of cluster munitions with the aim of joining the Convention soon.

Thank you.