

Statement on Universalization

9th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

2-4 September 2019



Thank you, Mr. President.

The CMC would like to warmly welcome the Gambia and the Philippines as the newest States Parties! We also congratulate and thank the Philippines for hosting, with the support of New Zealand, a regional workshop in Manila earlier this year to promote the Convention in the Asia-Pacific. This was an excellent initiative – and we need more of such!

As it has been remarked on already, the pace of universalization of this convention has been way too slow. With 106 States Parties - we are far behind our goal from Dubrovnik of 130 States Parties by the Convention's 2nd Review Conference, next year.

We thank all states who have provided updates on their ratification and accession today, especially those we rarely get to hear from. Please complete your ratification or accession and come onboard prior to the 2nd Review Conference. In particular the 14 remaining signatories should urgently take the final step.

Mr. President, we were pleased to see the adoption of the 2018 UN General Assembly Resolution on the implementation of the Convention by the record number of 144 countries, including by 33 non-signatories. Remarkably Russia changed its vote to abstain for the first time, having previously voted against the resolution. That left Zimbabwe as the only country to vote against the resolution last year. We want to underline again – all States Parties and signatories should vote in favor of this annual resolution and no state should vote against it.

We continue to be deeply disturbed by the ongoing use of cluster munitions in Syria and the harm they cause. This is horrifying and unacceptable. We call on all states to do all they can to put an end to any use of this weapon by anyone under any circumstances.

There have been also allegations of cluster munitions use in Libya and most recently in Kashmir, neither of which the Cluster Munition Monitor has been able to verify and confirm so far.

In the course of the past year, the CMC and its members around the world have continued their universalization efforts through bilateral meetings, expert presentations, media work, lobbying, and outreach efforts in capitals. We were also pleased to collaborate with the Coordinators this year on their excellent outreach at the Organization of American States (OAS) and here in Geneva.

Mr. President, ahead of the 2nd Review Conference, which will be an opportunity to review and adjust the work and the *modus operandi* of the Convention for the following years, we would like to ask all States Parties to think what we should do to stimulate universalization? What means, structures, ideas we should adopt at the Conference next year so the membership of the Convention grows much more rapidly?

We as civil society remain determined to work until all states have joined the Convention and will continue to work with all of you until we get there.

Last, but not least, we would like to extend our thanks and congratulations to the Sri Lankan Presidency. A country faced with many national challenges and priorities, who had the courage not only to join the Convention but also to take on its leadership. We hope this is an inspiration and example for those still remaining outside.

Thank you.