

**9th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
(CCM)**

2 – 4 September 2019, Geneva

Statement by Sri Lanka under Item 9(a)

Mr. President,

Your Presidency of the 9th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions today is an indication of the confidence placed in Sri Lanka and in your ability to steer the process through to success.

Over the past four years, the universalization and implementation of the Convention have been actively promoted by Croatia, Germany, The Netherlands and Nicaragua, whose representatives are present here today in the capacity of Vice Presidents.

We are fully aware that the Coordination Committee has been the driving force behind the Convention for a year since September 2018. Without the valuable contributions of the Coordinators on universalization, clearance and risk reduction education, international cooperation and assistance, stockpile reduction and retention, reporting, national implementation measures and victim assistance, the objectives of the Convention would have remained largely unfulfilled. In the same manner, without the expertise and support provided by the Implementation Support Unit and UNODA, it would be hardly imaginable how the States Parties would have followed through the implementation of the Convention. It is recalled that the ISU and its Director and staff provided support to the President and the coordinators, and guided them in the effective performance of their responsibility throughout the year.

We owe a deep sense of gratitude to all of you for your collective wisdom, shared commitment, and drive and initiative.

Mr. President,

It is our intrinsic belief that Universalization of the Convention and its norms is imperative to ensure a world free of cluster munitions. Universalization, in our view, covers two important aspects, namely extending the reach of the Convention to all

countries, and enhancing its implementation within each country, that has become a State party.

In our efforts to extend the reach of the Convention, we are pleased that we have two newest State Parties since the conclusion of the 8th Meeting of States Parties in 2018. Gambia and the Philippines, whose participation we warmly welcome today, ratified the Convention in December 2018 and January 2019 respectively.

On our part, over the past year, Sri Lanka has actively pursued the goal of Universalization, playing an active role of advocacy based on national experience. In October last year, Sri Lanka had organized a Universalization side event in New York coinciding with the UN General Assembly session. In June 2019, we were able to share our national experience with a group of non-State Parties at the South East Asia Regional Workshop on the CCM held in Manila, The Philippines. We stand ready to continue these efforts in the future.

Mr. President,

Following a clear policy decision, Sri Lanka acceded to the CCM on 1st March 2018, soon after our accession to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in December 2017. This was a strong manifestation of Sri Lanka's political will, commitment and perseverance to achieve tangible results in humanitarian disarmament and the Sri Lanka military was fully behind this decision to subscribe to and implement the Convention. In this regard, we also recall the encouragement of our international partners and other stakeholders.

In keeping with the provisions of the Convention, which entered into force for Sri Lanka in September 2018, we have ensured the timely submission of our initial transparency report in February 2019. Preparations for this transparency report provided an opportunity for all relevant actors in Sri Lanka to reflect on the priorities, future measures and way forward in implementing specific provisions of the Convention. This was a learning experience given that our accession to the Convention came in the wake of our decision to ratify the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

In complying with our reporting obligations, we would be guided by the spirit of the Convention, including all thematic areas covered. An area that has been identified for further consideration is exploring through our internal processes, whether a separate legal enactment to give effect to the Convention is required, or adequate legal provisions already exist, to enable the implementation of all Convention related

obligations. In this regard, we appreciate the assistance extended by relevant stakeholders including the ICRC.

As we enter the second decade of the CCM, let us assure that Sri Lanka would do all that is possible towards realizing the objectives of the Convention and contributing to building the momentum to the second review conference in 2020 which will take place under the able leadership of Switzerland.

I thank you, Mr. President.