



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

Convention on Cluster Munitions Second Preparatory Meeting to the Second Review Conference 4 September 2020, Palais des Nations, Geneva

On the review of the operation and the status of the Convention 2016-2020

Mister President,

The Philippines wishes to thank you and the Implementation Support Unit for ensuring the continuity of our work despite the pandemic.

This year, the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention anchors our timely stock-taking of our achievements to implement this important instrument. We appreciate the excellent work of the Presidency in putting together this draft Review of the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

The Philippines is encouraged by the successes and gains since the First Review Conference. We commend the thirty-six (36) State Parties that completed their obligations under Article 3, and encourage the five others to continue taking positive steps towards stockpile destruction. The destruction of nearly 1.5 million cluster munitions containing 178 million submunitions these past five years brings us closer to achieving our vision of a world free of cluster munitions. These are all appropriately recorded in the draft Review.

In addition, there have been a number of positive developments that likewise merit mention in the Review, including the accession of Niue as the 109th State Party to the Convention, and the completion by Croatia and Montenegro of their clearance obligations under Article 4. The Philippines takes this opportunity to congratulate Niue, Croatia and Montenegro on these milestones.

The draft Review provides useful information on progress and challenges related to clearance, risk education, and victim assistance. The Philippines is inspired by the success of the establishment of Country Coalitions, which have afforded affected states the opportunity to discuss needs and challenges specific to their national conditions. This has synergized international cooperation and national efforts towards the protection of communities, girls, women, boys, and men from the threat of cluster munition remnants.

Moving forward, international cooperation and assistance must be undertaken with the view to building national ownership. The Review Document should clearly state the need for the international community to work with affected states with the view to reducing the latter's reliance on foreign experts, and therefore enhancing their independent national capacities.

The Philippines agrees with the candid assessment of the draft Review that the Convention underperforms in the area of universalization. This realistic appraisal has inspired the Presidency and the universalization coordinators, the Philippines and Chile, to work with other stakeholders to promote adherence to the Convention. Some of these efforts merit mention in the draft Review, including:

- the creation of the Informal Working Group on Universalization that will facilitate greater coordination with the view to synergizing efforts of all stakeholders to promote the Convention and its norms;
- the designation by the Presidency of priority regions, which includes Asia-Pacific, where the Philippines conducted an online outreach to around 50 military and defense ministry officials from all ten ASEAN Member States to promote the Convention on 29 July; and
- the ongoing work by the coordinators for universalization to draft a Ways Forward paper for the consideration of the Second Review Conference.

Thank you, Mister President.

