



PHILIPPINES

Second Part of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

20-21 September 2021

STATEMENT

on Agenda Item 7: Reaffirming the Determination to Put an End to Suffering Caused by Cluster Munitions

Mister President,

Please allow me to begin by expressing the Philippines' profound appreciation for the leadership that you have demonstrated despite the disruptions caused by the current pandemic.

The Philippines likewise appreciates the invaluable work of the Implementation Support Unit under the dynamic and proactive leadership of Director Sheila Mweemba.

As a member of the Coordination Committee, the Philippines looks forward to working under the leadership of His Excellency Ambassador Aidan Liddle, whose election yesterday as President of the Tenth Meeting of States Parties we welcome.

We congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa on his nomination as President of the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties.

Mister President,

The Philippines actively participated in the process that led to the negotiation, adoption, and entry into force of this Convention. Even

before the completion of our domestic ratification process, we had been actively engaged in the work of this Convention.

Our determination to put an end to the untold suffering caused by cluster munitions finds expression in our efforts to promote this Convention's universalization. In 2019, we hosted the Manila workshop on the universalization of the Convention in Asia-Pacific. We likewise hosted a similar forum for military officials in Southeast Asia in 2020. We are proud to co-sponsor the working paper Ways Forward on Universalization with our co-coordinator Chile, which has been adopted to guide our work moving forward.

Our advocacy for the full and effective implementation of the Convention and the norms that it enshrines is rooted in our national commitment to the principles of humanitarian disarmament.

Our Constitution denounces war as an instrument of state policy, and in cases where armed conflict becomes extremely unavoidable, we have sought to limit and avoid any superfluous death, injuries, and suffering. The Philippines' principled policy to promote and uphold International Humanitarian Law is therefore ironclad.

In this context, we join many other States Parties in condemning any use of cluster munitions by any actor under any circumstances.

We affirm that, as States Parties to this Convention, we have an obligation to promote the universalization not only the Convention as a legal instrument but also the norms that it seeks to enshrine.

Mister President,

In our engagement with all humanitarian disarmament processes, we have always been guided by two core principles: the centrality of the victims and the strengthening of the independent national capacities of affected states in responding to the challenges posed by these deadly weapons.

Promoting and protecting the interests of the victims of cluster munitions and cluster munition contamination should always be the North Star of our efforts to implement this Convention. This requires a wholistic,

inclusive, and nuanced appreciation of their needs, including through context-specific and gender and diversity-sensitive mine action.

Strengthening the independent national capacities of affected states entails incorporating mine clearance into their domestic efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and begins with reducing their reliance on foreign technical expertise and enhancing national ownership of mine action.

The Philippines firmly believes that upholding these two principles will enhance our collective efforts to firmly put an end to all suffering caused by cluster munitions.

I thank you, Mister President.