

Commonwealth CCM Universalisation Workshop 2023

Background Paper

Motivated by principles of humanity and concerned at the extent of civilian suffering caused by these weapons, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) put in place a comprehensive prohibition on cluster munitions. The CCM is a legally binding international treaty that comprehensively prohibits the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions, requires the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions within eight years, and clearance of contaminated land within ten years. Cluster bombs have killed and injured thousands of civilians over the last 70 years and unfortunately, continue to do so today. In all of the conflicts where these weapons were used, they have left a predictable pattern of human suffering. It is this unacceptable harm that the Convention was created to prevent and mitigate.

A solid commitment to international cooperation and assistance to enable States Parties to implement their obligations was central in the negotiations leading to the adoption of the CCM in 2008. The Convention, therefore, strongly relies on transparency, efficient cooperation, and constructive assistance among and between all CCM stakeholders. They can also benefit from existing good practices, tools and resources aimed at increasing partnerships, facilitating cooperation, and ensuring the full implementation of obligations. If States Parties are unable to clear contaminated areas or to destroy stockpiled cluster munitions, they can submit extension requests prolonging the original deadlines.

The Lausanne Action Plan (LAP) adopted by States Parties at the Second Review Conference (2RC) held in 2021 underlines the urgent need for further efforts to promote the norms established by the Convention. As of 10 January 2023, 123 States have committed to the goals of the CCM – 110 as States Parties and 13 as Signatories. Of these, thirty-three (33) are also members of The Commonwealth of Nations. This represents around two-thirds of the 56 Commonwealth membership that have committed to the treaty demonstrating the strong commitment towards a world free of cluster munitions. There are also 6 Signatory States and 16 States not Party to the CCM in the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth has the opportunity to be one of the first associations whose members have all committed to promote a world free of cluster munitions. Leadership from Commonwealth members to strengthen the norm against cluster munitions would once again send a strong message against any use of these weapons, thus saving lives and livelihoods around the world. Joining the Convention is achievable, and support is available to enable States to meet their obligations - whether it is the implementation of national measures, annual transparency reporting, victim assistance, stockpile destruction or clearance of cluster munition remnants.

Notwithstanding the progress achieved in the pursuit of the universal acceptance of the Convention, much remains to be done to meet the LAP's goal. An increase in adherence to the Convention especially in within the Commonwealth would be critical to intensify efforts to promote the observance of the Convention's norms and achieve its universalization.

Purpose

The workshop builds on past regional workshops such as most recently the CARICOM CCM Universalisation workshop in Grenada (2020), ASEAN CCM Webinar (2021), and the CCM African Regional Universalization Workshop held in Abuja (2022).

The workshop aims to give Commonwealth CCM Signatory States and States not Party, the opportunity to discuss the obstacles and challenges faced in the ratification or accession process and to explore concrete solutions to ensure their swift adherence. States representatives attending the workshop will be required to provide a current overview of the status of their processes on ratification/accession to the Convention.

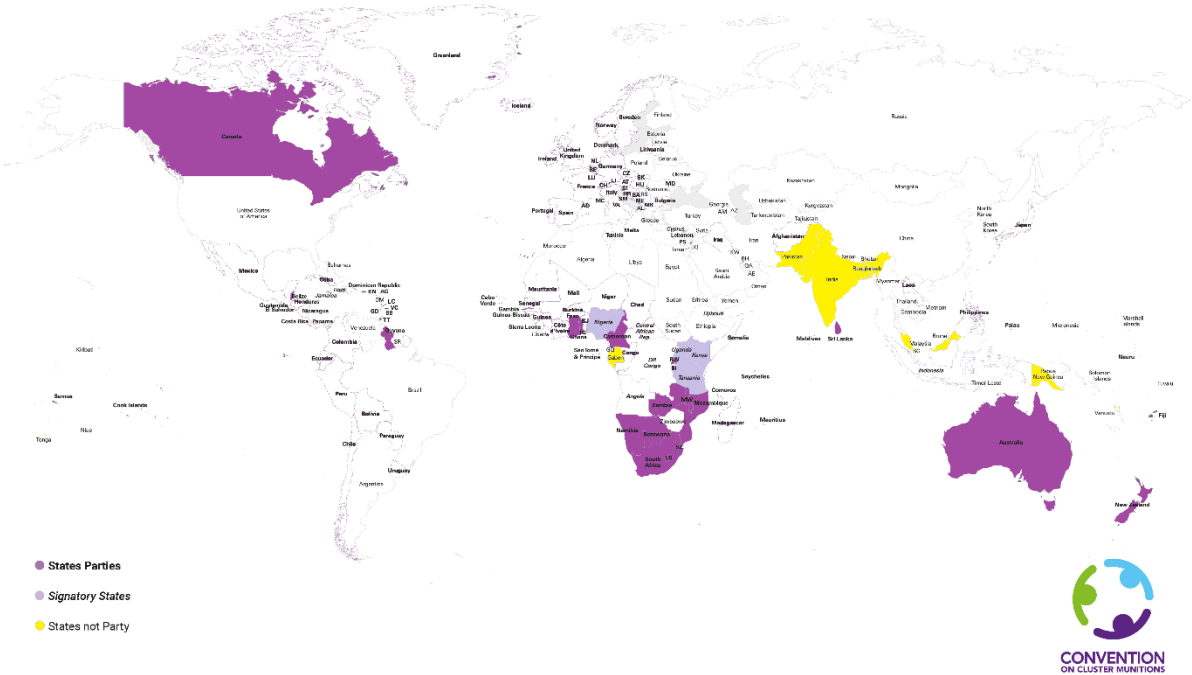
The Eleventh Meeting of States Parties (11MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions will take place in Geneva, Switzerland from 11 to 14 September 2023. At this meeting, States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions will report on progress made in implementing their treaty obligations and on the Lausanne Action Plan. Signatories and States not Party will also be encouraged to participate in the Meeting and to provide updates on their progress and plans for ratification of or accession to the Convention.

This workshop is organized by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention on Cluster Munitions with the generous financial support of the Government of the United Kingdom and the support of the 11MSP presidency, Iraq.

Commonwealth Membership to the CCM

CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Commonwealth States



*United Nations Regional Groups
This map is for illustrative purposes and does not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the ISU concerning the legal status of any country or territory, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

STATUS OF COMMONWEALTH STATES TO THE CCM (January 2023)

States Parties	Signatory States	States not Party
1. Antigua and Barbuda	1. Cyprus	1. Bahamas, The
2. Australia	2. Jamaica	2. Bangladesh
3. Belize	3. Kenya	3. Barbados
4. Botswana	4. Nigeria	4. Brunei
5. Cameroon	5. Uganda	5. Dominica
6. Canada	6. Tanzania	6. Gabon
7. Gambia, The		7. India
8. Ghana		8. Kiribati
9. Grenada		9. Malaysia
10. Guyana		10. Pakistan
11. Eswatini		11. Papua New Guinea
12. Fiji		12. Singapore
13. Lesotho		13. Solomon Islands
14. Malawi		14. Tonga
15. Maldives, The		15. Tuvalu
16. Malta		16. Vanuatu
17. Mauritius		
18. Mozambique		
19. Namibia		
20. Nauru		
21. New Zealand		
22. Rwanda		
23. Samoa		
24. Seychelles		
25. Sierra Leone		
26. South Africa		
27. Sri Lanka		
28. Saint Lucia		
29. Saint Kitts and Nevis		
30. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		
31. Trinidad and Tobago		
32. Togo		
33. United Kingdom		
34. Zambia		