



PHILIPPINES

**Eleventh Meeting of States Parties to the
Convention on Cluster Munitions
11-14 September 2023**

Agenda 8: General Exchange of Views

*Delivered by Ms. Kristine Leilani R. Salle, Deputy Permanent Representative and
Minister, Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations
Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva*

Mister President,

Please allow me to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation for your leadership and for the work of the Implementation Support Unit.

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.

This engagement finds anchor in our constitutional renunciation of war as an instrument of policy, our ironclad commitment to International Humanitarian Law, and our determination to pursue humanitarian disarmament to its fullest extent.

The experience of Southeast Asia demonstrates that cluster munitions cause unnecessary suffering and superfluous injury, and that their remnants pose a grave threat to peoples and communities for decades, thus hampering development.

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

We therefore regret the decision of the United States to transfer cluster munitions to Ukraine. We condemn any use of these repugnant weapons by any actor anywhere, at any time, and under any circumstances, including in Ukraine.

Mister President,

We welcome the accession of Nigeria and South Sudan to the Convention. We commend you and the Coordinators for Universalization, Spain and Malawi, for helping make these accessions happen.

This success demonstrates that effectiveness of the guidance given to us by the Review Conference, particularly in the paper Ways Forward on Universalization that the Philippines and Chile prepared for the Conference.

Even as we count our success, we should also acknowledge challenges. We support the Presidency and the Coordination Committee in their efforts to resolve challenges related to compliance with Article 3. We commend South Africa for its constructive engagement in this regard.

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 use and cluster munition contamination should always be the primary goal 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.