



Summary of the Opening and General Exchange of Views

As he welcomed some 100 nations to the opening ceremony of the 4MSP, the **President of Zambia** Michael Chilufya Sata stated that “cluster munitions have no place in the modern era” and invited meeting participants to work together to ensure that the world is saved from these indiscriminate weapons. He condemned “in the strongest terms” the production, use and stockpiling of cluster munitions by any country. The **President of the 3MSP**, Steffen Kongstad, emphasized the rapid acceptance of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as “the standard to which all members of the international community will be held” and stated that in many respects the first years of the convention have been extraordinarily successful.

A message was delivered on behalf of the **UN Secretary-General**, hailing the convention as a concrete example of a successful partnership among a range of stakeholders working jointly to prevent suffering caused by a weapon. **Aynalem Zenebe** from Ethiopia shared her personal experience as a cluster munition survivor and expressed hope for “no more victims” – a wish that can come true if all stockpiles are destroyed, all land is cleared, and all use stops. She reminded delegates that their energy and commitment can make this wish come true.

High-level representatives from Angola, Honduras, Iraq, Namibia, Malawi and Tanzania took the floor during the opening ceremony or opening session with statements of a general nature. Statements from those Ministers or Secretaries of State are included below, along with other statements made during the General Exchange of Views.

During the opening session, the **President of the 3MSP** outlined the work accomplished by the Norwegian Presidency during its mandate. The **President of the 4MSP** announced that universalization would be the theme of this year’s Zambian Presidency. The **UN Resident Coordinator** in Zambia said the CCM was “a remarkable tool” to put an end to the suffering caused by cluster munitions and urged all states to join the convention. The Vice-President of the **International Committee of the Red Cross** said the international reaction to instances of use of cluster munitions stigmatized the weapon and strengthened the idea that such use is unacceptable. He noted that states should adopt national implementation measures urgently and reiterated that the ICRC would keep promoting the universalization and implementation of the convention. Robert Mtonga delivered a colorful and inspiring address on behalf of the **CMC**, setting the scene for a successful week and inviting all states to “feel the wind” from the mighty Victoria Falls pushing them towards full universalization of the convention.

Statements by States Parties

Afghanistan announced it has drafted a law prohibiting the production, use, transportation, and stockpiling of explosive items including cluster munitions, and that the Ministry of Justice is currently reviewing the bill. **Albania** said it is carrying out an assessment of the social and economic needs of victims, the findings of which will be shared in November 2013. **Australia** stated that its national law is consistent with the CCM, and said it will continue to assist affected countries through a comprehensive approach aiming at improving the quality of life of the victims and enhancing the capacity of countries to manage their mine action projects.

Austria said the convention relies on the expertise and collaboration of survivors, and noted that the use of cluster munitions by states not party highlights the need to put an emphasis on universalization activities. **Belgium** said that to achieve the objective of a world free of cluster munitions, major stakeholders should be convinced to follow the rules of the CCM. **Chile** announced it had destroyed its entire stockpile of cluster munitions. **Costa Rica** said that “regional rotation” is vital to have more countries aligning themselves with the CCM. **Cote d’Ivoire** recalled it completed the destruction of its stockpile and that it is not retaining cluster munitions for training purposes. It also expressed its commitment to continue its effort to ensure the universalization of the convention through sub-regional mobilization.

Czech Republic reported that in 2012-2013 it has conducted bilateral consultations with countries during which it has pointed out the importance of joining the CCM. **Denmark** announced its stockpile has been transferred to the company in charge of destruction, and reaffirmed that destruction should be completed by the end of 2013. **Ecuador** recalled that it has adopted legal and administrative measures to implement the convention in its domestic legislation, and called on the international community to work towards a strong stigmatization and de-legitimization of the use of cluster munitions.

France reported having conducted regular universalization outreach with partners, and said it will continue to provide demining and training assistance helping countries to build their own national demining expertise. **Germany** considered the report of use of cluster munitions by Syria as a reason why universalization must remain an important goal of the activities under the CCM, and said it will continue to assist states in fulfilling their obligations. **Ghana** said it gives special value to the universalization of the CCM, and emphasized the key role of regional meeting in promoting universalization. **Grenada** reported that a draft legislation to implement the convention was presented some days ago to parliament for approval and reiterated its full commitment to the universalization of the convention. **Honduras** welcomed the major progress made on clearance, victim assistance and international cooperation, pointing nevertheless the need to do more to fully implement the convention.

Iraq reaffirmed its commitment to get rid of cluster munitions and highlighted the major obstacles it is facing, namely the lack of statistics and data on cluster munitions and the lack of geographical mapping of contaminated areas. **Ireland** welcomed the advances made towards universalization of the CCM, but noted the need to remain active in the efforts to bring additional states on board the convention in particular those affected by or possessing cluster munitions. **Italy** reported its stockpile destruction is underway and should be completed in advance of its deadline, and said it attaches great importance to international cooperation and assistance. **Japan** announced that the destruction of its stockpile of 14,000 cluster munitions would start this month in Europe and should be completed by the end of 2015. It also expressed its determination to actively promote the CCM in Asia.

Lao PDR reported that it is developing a methodology allowing land release on the basis of survey when there is no evidence of contamination. It also noted it was “about to finalize a victim assistance strategy ... which includes a proposal ... to work closely with the National Committee for Disabled Persons.” **Luxembourg** said that it had included the prohibition of investments in cluster munitions in its national legislation, and expressed hope that other countries would do the same. **Mexico** reiterated its view that the ratification of the CCM by a large number of states will ensure that producers and stockpilers of cluster munitions stop their activities, and said that the recent use of cluster munitions provides further impetus to continue working on raising awareness on these weapons.

Mozambique reiterated its commitment towards the implementation of the CCM and emphasized that “the core values of the Convention are now so pervasive that it is becoming increasingly hard to ignore its existence.” **The Netherlands** reported it has promulgated a law prohibiting investments into companies manufacturing cluster munitions. **Norway** presented the main findings of the Lusaka Progress Report (<http://bit.ly/1fMywWB>), and reported on its work to establish an ISU. **New Zealand** stressed that domestic implementation is key to ensure the goals of the convention are met and said it stands ready to provide States Parties with any assistance they may need to put in place legislative means to implement the CCM under their national system.

Portugal emphasized the role of cooperation between states to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and to promote universalization. **Senegal** reiterated its determination to participate in the efforts towards CCM universalization, and called on all states that have not joined the convention to do so. **Spain** noted that major producers have not yet join the CCM and emphasized the need to focus efforts toward the universalization of the convention. **Swaziland** called on all African governments to unite their efforts with NGOs and civil society to raise awareness on the weapon.

Switzerland said its revised Law on war materials bans cluster munitions and contains clear sanctions for violations, as well as an explicit prohibition of the direct funding of production of the weapon. **Togo** reported on its efforts towards universalization of the convention and urged states not party to join the CCM as soon as possible. The **UK** said it is committed to fully implement the CCM by complying with its own obligations and by providing substantial financial support to other countries in reducing the socio-economic and environmental impacts of mines and ERW including cluster munitions.

Statements by signatories

Angola noted that whereas it is not yet a state party to the CCM it is involved in identifying and destroying cluster munitions on its territory, and added that its ratification process is at a “very advanced stage.” **Benin** reported it will soon conclude its process of ratification and reaffirmed that it doesn’t produce, use or transfer the weapon. **Canada** reported its implementing legislation is currently under review by the Parliament and added it has already taken steps to apply the CCM such as withdrawing its remaining stock from active service, starting its destruction, and advocating for states not party to accede to the convention. **Colombia** reported its legal procedure to accede to the convention is in its last review phase by the Constitutional Court and highlighted that it has already destroyed all its stockpiles (without any retention) and has never manufactured the weapon.

Kenya said ratification was “under consideration by the government.” **Madagascar** reported on its political situation that is hampering ratification and expressed hope to bring new information about its ratification process at the next intersessional meeting. **Namibia** announced it would become a State Party to the CCM before the 5MSP. **Nigeria** said it was taking “every necessary step to expedite ratification” and called on States Parties to redouble their efforts in strengthening international cooperation to achieve the objectives of the convention.

Statements by non-signatories

Cambodia explained once again that a range of national stakeholders wish to study the convention’s definition of the weapon before any further step can be taken towards joining. **China** expressed the view that irresponsible use and transfer is the main cause of concerns over cluster munitions and added that it is ready to cooperate with States Parties to the CCM. **Ethiopia** noted that it does not

produce nor transfer cluster munitions, that it “fully” supported the convention and that it had given consideration to the possibility of joining. **Mongolia** said that it fully supports the spirit and principles of the CCM and that it would continue to pursue its step-by-step approach to accession.

Palestine said it stands ready to support and promote the CCM. **Thailand** shared the view that rapid universalization is important. It reported that even if it is not a State Party to the CCM, it has been implementing some obligations of the convention concerning clearance, risk education and victim assistance, and that it “adheres strictly to (the) humanitarian principles created by the Convention.” **Vietnam** said it supports the humanitarian goal of the CCM, and reported that it has adopted guidelines including a comprehensive plan for 2010-2025 showing its determination to clear and destroy cluster munitions.

Other interventions

The **African Union** said it continues to support its member states to meet their obligations under the CCM and to encourage those that remain outside of the convention to join it. The **European Union** reiterated its will to work for the reintegration of the victims and its commitment to assist states that need support. The **International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** listed three indispensable victim assistance factors: the importance of addressing this issue through a global perspective, the importance of local ownership, and the requirement for partnerships.

Sarah Blakemore who addressed the plenary on behalf of the **CMC** emphasized that “every country in the world can join and should join this convention; it is a question of prioritizing the protection of civilians during and after conflict”, and expressed the CMC’s deep concern over the extensive use of cluster munitions by Syria. She welcomed the significant progress made under the CCM in clearance, victim assistance, and stockpile destruction, and called on states to maintain their dedication and commitment to the convention.

Reactions to instances of use

A large number of states took the floor to condemn cluster munition use by Syria or to express concern over cluster munition use by any actor under any circumstances. A full run-down of the week’s statements on cluster munition use is available in the summary on universalization.

Mentions of CMC or civil society

Angola and **Japan** acknowledged the role of the civil society in implementing the CCM. **Australia** commended the role of the civil society in supporting the convention’s humanitarian achievements. **Austria** commended the efforts of the CMC on universalization and said the partnership between states and NGOs is crucial to maximize the potential of the convention.

Cambodia thanked the CMC for its letter providing information on the definition of cluster munitions. **Denmark** thanked the CMC and its Danish members for their fruitful cooperation. **Ghana** acknowledged the role of the civil society, including the CMC and the Red Cross Movement in universalization activities. **Honduras** noted the important contribution of civil society in ensuring the creation and strength of the CCM. **Norway** thanked the CMC and other partners for the support they provided during its Presidency.

Statements from these sessions are available at <http://bit.ly/17zv3mm>