

**CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS
INTERSESSIONAL MEETING
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 15-18 APRIL 2013**



SUMMARY of the SESSION ON UNIVERSALIZATION

The session was chaired by **Ghana** and **Portugal** as Co-Coordiators of the working group on universalization. They confirmed their intention to keep working with states not party to overcome obstacles related to joining the Convention, and recalled that joining disarmament conventions can be “important confidence-building measures ... relevant to regional stability and security needs of countries.” Referencing the 2012 Accra Regional Conference on Universalization, they encouraged others to follow suit “as the regional approach already proved to be a very useful tool in promoting the Convention.” They urged states not party to consider submitting voluntary Article 7 reports.

Signatories and states not party

Armenia said that it is not affected with cluster munition remnants and that it does not use, stockpile, produce or export cluster munitions, nor does it intend to do so. It stated its full support for the aims of the Convention and expressed hope that simultaneous adhesion to the Convention by neighbouring South Caucasus states would reduce the security threat perception. **Canada** explained the next steps in the legislative process that will conclude with ratification, and stated an expectation the process would recommence this Spring. **DR Congo** said it would deposit its instrument of ratification “very soon.”

Ethiopia stated it does not produce or transfer cluster munitions. It said it was taking part in the intersessional meeting “with a great expectation to learn” and that it was confident the meeting would “help us make the right decision in the near future.” **South Africa** explained that it is awaiting the approval of a memorandum on ratification by the Cabinet, which will afterwards be presented to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee. **Suriname** (speaking during the session on victim assistance) said that it does not use or produce cluster munitions, that it “highly recognizes the importance of becoming a State Party to this Convention”, and that its accession process had started with national legislation and an explanatory memorandum submitted to the Board of Ministers.

States Parties

Bulgaria reported that it had approached Georgia, which was “in general ... very positive” about the CCM and Mine Ban Treaty. **Chad** announced that it had submitted its ratification instrument in March 2013, encouraged countries that have not joined the Convention to do so, and requested international support to address its contamination. **Chile** said the CCM was a fundamental part of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and announced it is preparing a regional seminar for Latin American and Caribbean countries on universalization and implementation. **Costa Rica** and **Grenada** outlined their efforts to promote the CCM among Caribbean states. **Croatia** spoke about a workshop on universalization and implementation that it hosted in May 2012 for representatives of South-Eastern European countries. **Ecuador** strongly condemned cluster munition use in Syria. **France** announced that it would start a new series of diplomatic contacts with states not party as of mid-2013.

Ghana stated its commitment to promoting universalization via the Accra Action Plan and as co-Coordinator to states not party worldwide and expressed concern with ongoing civilian casualties caused by use of cluster munitions. **Japan** condemned cluster munition use in Syria “as entirely unacceptable”, and reported on its universalization activities that included outreach at the March 2013 Asian Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation. **Lao PDR** said that it uses “every possible opportunity” to promote the CCM, including the 2012 Asia-Europe Summit Meeting and UN General Assembly, as well as a number of regional or national events in 2013. **Lebanon** said universalization was “an utmost priority” and outlined its outreach efforts in the Middle-East. **Mexico** noted that it has included the CCM in its bilateral agendas of work with states not party.

Palau committed to continue its universalization efforts in the Pacific and reported on the 2012 UXO Pacific Workshop that included a CCM component. It announced the imminent opening of its Regional EOD Training Center. **Peru** noted that the Convention has helped developing the principles of distinction and proportionality under IHL. **Senegal** voiced its support for full universalization. **Switzerland** pointed out that its national legislation implementing the Convention that has entered into force on 1 February 2013 includes penal sanctions for prohibited acts and deals with direct and indirect investments in cluster munition production. **Togo** said it will host a regional conference on 22-23 May and stated its commitment to universalization.

Other organizations

The **International Committee of the Red Cross** said the adherence of all states to the Convention was “a priority” and outlined its universalization activities including two upcoming regional meetings on IHL in Nairobi (June) and Pretoria (August). It welcomed the expressions of concern over cluster munition use, made by the 3MSP President and by many states, and explained that for its part the ICRC would voice its concern in the framework of its bilateral and confidential dialogue with the parties to an armed conflict.

The **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** called for universal adherence to the CCM and welcomed the various regional workshops held in 2012 and planned for 2013. It reiterated its members’ commitment to promote CCM universalization, especially in affected states.

Speaking on behalf of the **CMC**, Sarah Blakemore said the full universalization of the CCM remained the number one priority for the CMC, and recalled that Article 21 makes it a legal requirement for States Parties to promote universalization. She stressed that the majority of countries worldwide have already recognized that the negative humanitarian impact of cluster munitions far outweighs any perceived military benefit. She expressed grave concern with cluster munition use by Syrian government forces.

Statements on universalization are available at <http://bit.ly/111sYl>