

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Universalisation
Convention on Cluster Munitions 4th Meeting of the States Parties
Lusaka, 11 September 2013**



Thank you Madame President

Universalisation of the convention is the CMC's top priority and we are pleased that it has been chosen as the priority of the Zambian presidency over the coming year. Promoting universalization of the Convention is obliged under Article 21, and we will be monitoring states' adherence to this obligation as we do all other articles. 85 countries remain outside the convention – and our goal is for as many countries as possible to join. It's a goal that *is* achievable if we work together to make it happen. We continue to hear resounding condemnation of cluster munitions from states outside of the convention and recognition that they pose an unacceptable threat to civilians – so we ask these states to go one step further and cement the protection of civilians by joining the treaty.

The Cluster Munition Coalition would like to congratulate the seven states that have ratified since the 3rd Meeting of States Parties in Oslo (Peru, Australia, Nauru, Liechtenstein, Chad, Bolivia and Iraq) and we welcome Andorra, which acceded in April. As we have heard, 112 countries have now joined the convention, of which 83 are States Parties.

We know that a significant number of countries made progress over the last year to edge closer to ratification or accession. We have valued working in partnership with these countries nationally, regionally, and globally throughout the year and we offer our continued support to those countries to complete the task. Yet, at the same time, we have also faced disappointment over the year as we know that a good proportion of these countries could have become States Parties by now. We therefore implore you: do not let another year slip by, finish what you have started. We welcome all of the positive words and intentions towards universalisation of this treaty, but we must also see your actions.

We thank the coordinators on universalisation – Portugal and Ghana – for their efforts over the last year and we have appreciated the opportunity to work in partnership with you in this regard – sharing knowledge, resources, developing strategies with you and offering the support of our network of campaigners in more than one hundred countries worldwide. We thank Togo for hosting us at the successful Lomé regional conference on universalisation of the convention and look forward to continuing to work with Zambia, Togo and Ghana to support the *African Working Committee on Universalisation* and to support the implementation of the Lomé Strategy in the coming year. We look forward to working with Norway as new co-chair on universalisation alongside Ghana, and also with the team of governments that have or will be committing to universalization efforts.

Champions are what we need. We need States Parties that will make this a top foreign policy priority and will devote the diplomatic and financial resources necessary to champion the cause of universalisation of this treaty, and we need individuals that will make it their personal challenge. It is within your power to encourage and help other countries to ratify and accede to this treaty. And the Cluster Munition Coalition is here to support you in this challenge. In the early years of the Mine Ban Treaty the power of State Party champions of universalisation was clear – it made a difference.

For the non-States Parties in the room and around the world, let us repeat these truths: The threat posed by cluster munitions is well established. Not only have cluster munitions killed and injured thousands of civilians during their history of use, but their presence over large areas of fertile land or urban areas has continued to pose a threat to the safety and livelihood of communities over the long term. We also know that we have a solution at our fingertips through the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

For those of you here this week representing countries that have not yet joined the convention, this week offers the opportunity to learn more about the treaty and how to take the next steps. Take the opportunity to meet with our campaigners, and find out why so many of them dedicate their lives to this cause and how the CMC can help you in your country. Take the opportunity to learn from other government representatives and to find out how they championed the convention to ensure their country joined. Take the opportunity to find answers to the questions you may have and solutions to the barriers you may be facing which currently prevent your country from acceding to the treaty. We know there are solutions to each and every one of those barriers or else why would such a significant number of countries have joined the treaty already, including stockpilers, former users and producers of the weapon, as well as the majority of affected countries, and countries for whom cluster munitions are not an immediate consideration.

It is within every one of you here this week to make cluster munitions and the protection of civilians your issue. You have a powerful community of governments, civil society, the UN, ICRC and others behind you to help you champion this cause – and the result of your efforts will be countless lives and limbs saved.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is part of the overall fabric of international humanitarian law and the global effort to promote human security and address armed violence. Some countries suffer from cluster munitions, some suffer more from other explosive remnants of war or other threats to the security of civilians. By joining the range of international instruments on the protection of civilians, states help to reinforce each other's efforts to promote peace and security for all.

To prevent future use of cluster munitions, like the horrific scenes that have emerged from Syria over the last year, we must strengthen this treaty through universalisation. This treaty is about prevention, and with every new country that joins, the global norm rejecting these weapons is reinforced.

We know that each state still outside the convention has its unique reason for doing so, but the CMC believes that none outweigh the value of joining. We would be pleased to discuss such reasons with you this week, with the goal of clarifying the convention's provisions, alleviating concerns about associated costs, or presenting you with information needed to support a positive decision by other members of your government or parliament. We offer our resources, expertise, and also our continued time and dedication to support you in the year ahead and look forward to helping you join the convention.

States Parties and signatory states - make this the year that your country becomes a champion.
Countries outside of the convention - make this the year your country becomes a member of our ground-breaking community putting the protection of civilians first.

Thank you.