

## CLUSTER MUNITION COALITION

### Statement on Stockpile Destruction

Delivered by Mary Wareham, Human Rights Watch for the Cluster Munition Coalition

Geneva

22 June 2015

As many of us edit *Cluster Munition Monitor 2015*, we see that most States Parties with cluster munition stockpiles are acting quickly and decisively to destroy them without waiting until the 8-year deadline approaches. We commend Japan's completion of the destruction of its stockpile of cluster munitions since our last meeting in September 2014.

When the international community came together to establish the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we were motivated by both revulsion at the use of cluster munitions and by a strong desire to prevent further harm. So we view stockpile destruction as a crucial part of the preventative nature of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and would like the Dubrovnik Action Plan to reflect the high ambitions that states had when it was adopted in Dublin in 2008.

We thank the Coordinators Albania and France for inviting the CMC to participate in the drafting Working Group. In its current form, we believe the draft Action Plan represents the bare minimum that states should commit to. The draft Action Plan requires that states have a plan for stockpile destruction. Five years into the life of the convention, we see that most States Parties have already prepared a stockpile destruction plan. So in order to emphasize that, you may want to change the first sentence of the Plan to "States Parties that have not yet done so should have a plan in place as soon as possible..."

We believe that no state should have to request an extension request for their stockpile destruction and it would help if the Plan reflects a commitment to destroy stockpiles by the deadline, as has been suggested by other speakers today.

We note that other sections of the Action Plan are ambitious and do not use language such as "endeavor to" or "if deemed necessary." The Plan is a collection of political commitments intended to advance the implementation of legal obligations. As such, the section on stockpile destruction should be just as bold and ambitious as the rest, using language such as "states will ensure" or "states will continue to" etcetera.

We welcome the idea of a voluntary template for declaring the completion of stockpile destruction and offer our support to the Coordinators and to States Parties to this end. This is a creative idea that we

hope will help promote clarity on stockpiles and allow for celebration of milestones on the way to a world free of cluster munitions.

We're puzzled that the draft Action Plan does not tackle the question of the retention of cluster munitions for research and training purposes. The CMC has been discouraging states from using this Article 3 exemption. We do not believe retention is necessary from a technical perspective and feel that it carries certain risks, especially with the high number of cluster munitions and submunitions several states are keeping.

A number of states parties that initially retained high numbers of cluster munitions for research and training purposes have either decided to not retain any cluster munitions for this purpose or have progressively reduced the number retained and not replace them. We would like to suggest that, in the Action Plan, states recommit to keeping the "minimum number absolutely necessary for the permitted purposes" as required by the Convention, and to scrupulously report on their past and planned use.