



Convention on Cluster Munitions Signing Conference

2-4 December 2008, Oslo, Norway

Closing Statement by Richard Moyes, CMC Co-Chair and Policy Director, Landmine Action Oslo, 4 December 2008

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Cluster munitions are banned. We did it – and we did it together.

The message has been clear – from many governments and organisations at this conference. We know that we can work together and build real solutions to humanitarian problems.

The partnership of civil society, international organisations and committed states is dynamic and powerful. And underpinning this partnership has been the political will. In response to human suffering, individual people have been moved to act. At this conference government ministers have stood side by side with women and men who have been wounded and impoverished by cluster munitions, united in their commitment to take action.

It has been a demanding process. We had many disagreements on the way. We talked to each other, we argued with each other – sometimes we even shouted at each other – but we continued to work together, from a basis of mutual friendship, respect and trust.

This is a treaty that we are deeply, deeply proud of. The Cluster Munition Coalition will work with energy and constant determination to bring more States into the treaty, to secure ratifications, and ensure full implementation – and to monitor this convention with rigor, vigilance and global reach.

States and civil society share now a common obligation to provide assistance to the individuals and communities living with the effects of cluster munition use.

We pay a particular tribute to the women and men working around the world on vital humanitarian and development projects. From remote jungle villages in Lao to the orchards of Lebanon, teams are undertaking the arduous and dangerous work of clearing lethal unexploded ordnance. The testimony from Lamis today was a moving reminder of the necessity of this work.

These people are part of our community.

As are the people providing risk education, medical care and prosthetics. The people working in rehabilitation and reintegration projects for survivors, and in development projects in affected areas.

As are those that work with governments to put in place the policies necessary to ensure full realisation of the rights of persons with disabilities.

And government officials, at every level, that work to protect civilians from the effects of armed violence.

The community of humanitarian practice is widespread and diverse. But sharing a common commitment, this community has found, once again, a strong voice. We will work tirelessly together to make the words on paper here a life changing reality for people living with the effects of these weapons.

But knowing what can be achieved together brings with it a responsibility for the future. We know that there is no justification for inaction in the face of humanitarian challenges.

We thank the Government of Norway for their vision and courage, and the core group for their leadership and guidance of the process.

We thank Norway, Ireland, the Holy See and Sierra Leone, who have ratified already and we call on others to ratify without delay. This is not about getting quick entry into force for the sake of it. It is about bringing into effect the key humanitarian obligations of this treaty. The sooner we get 30 ratifications, the sooner the treaty saves lives.

We thank affected countries and individuals for their leadership. Lao, Lebanon and others, and dramatically yesterday Afghanistan, after tireless work by our dear friends Soraj, Suleiman and Firoz and a bold decision by President Karzai. Afghanistan, we are so proud to have your signature on this treaty.

We thank all of the states that have gathered here to sign the treaty, and those that we know will sign in the future.

Yesterday, the distinguished delegate of Liberia described this group as “countries of conscience”. It is that conscience that has made this treaty happen.

Thank you and Happy Birthday Branislav.