



Convention on Cluster Munitions Signing Conference

2-4 December 2008, Oslo, Norway

Statement by Maria Pia Devoto, Argentina Oslo, 4 December 2008

Thank you, Mr Chair

My name is Maria Pia Devoto and I am from the CMC in Argentina. In February 2007, we challenged the world: the goal was set to have an International Treaty to ban cluster bombs by the end of 2008. The goal was fully achieved: negotiations were done in record time and I feel privileged to be here now witnessing this historic event.

I want to sincerely thank all the states that had the conviction and commitment that made all this a reality. The success of this process is the evidence of the strength of the partnership between governments and civil society.

But the work is not done yet. The partnership will be needed further to achieve full implementation of the treaty. We expect governments to show the political will to bring the Convention into force as soon as possible. We hope to achieve the 30 ratifications in the shortest possible time so that we continue our momentum. We would like to achieve the needed number of ratifications in the first half of 2009, so that the treaty enters into force by the end of 2009. This would be a great achievement without precedent and a clear signal that the states signing this Convention today are serious about ending human suffering.

We want to start the clock ticking on the deadlines for clearance and stockpile destruction. The quicker we get entry into force the quicker the most important obligations of the treaty will take effect and start saving lives and livelihoods. In fact the race for ratification and entry into force is a race to end the suffering from cluster bombs as soon as possible.

But ratification and entry into force is only the beginning of the journey. We will have a long way to go to ensure that the obligations of the treaty are met. From our perspective, only when affected communities can use their agricultural land again and let their children play without fear, only when victims and their families receive the adequate support needed to live in dignity, only then will we be able to say that the Convention has been successfully implemented.

Moreover, universalisation of this convention will also be a task requiring the work of both states parties and civil society. We encourage all the states participating in this conference but not signing yet, to do so as soon as possible. We are disappointed that a significant number of states adopted the Convention in Dublin but are not here signing today, especially those states that made a public commitment after Dublin to sign here in Oslo. We urge those states to live up to their commitment and sign in the coming days. We

recognise the positive development that some states that did not participate in the process are now revising their positions given the widespread level of signature here in Oslo. We also appeal to all the states that have signed this convention to promote it and to get other states on board. Believe me when I say that we from civil society will work relentlessly on the same task ourselves.

We have learned from the Mine Ban Treaty that monitoring is an essential tool to promote implementation. Monitoring is not just about being able to provide detailed information on how countries are meeting their obligations. The process of gathering this information is in itself an effective avenue for advocacy on the different aspects of the treaty, from clearance to stockpile destruction to victim assistance and donor funding. The Cluster Munition Coalition is committed to monitoring this new treaty and we will be working hard on this over the period ahead in collaboration with the highly successful Landmine Monitor initiative.

The Convention on Cluster Munition is the result of a remarkable process, that brought together different actors, all having the same objective – to rid the world of cluster munitions. And jointly we can and will achieve it.

Thank you.