



**Statement by Bruno Leclercq, Handicap International
Global Conference on the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Santiago, Chile, 7 June 2010**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

I am Bruno Leclercq, from Handicap International, Belgium.

During the course of this conference, you will hear several testimonies of survivors, such as Mr. Soraj Ghulam Habib, from Afghanistan, who made an inaugural statement.

For nearly 3 years now, Soraj and the other friends around me, have formed the “Ban Advocates” group.

The group was initiated by Handicap International, with the belief that what we today know as the Oslo process has to be inspired by the experience of affected individuals and communities.

It has received the support of the governments of Australia, Ireland, Netherlands and Norway and of the Diana (Princess of Wales Memorial) Fund.

This group is composed of extraordinary persons.

Extraordinary because they all went through personal suffering due to cluster munitions. In this sense, they are probably the most important people in this room.

Extraordinary too, because they all decided to overcome their trauma and injuries to engage in a new commitment.

I will of course not speak on their behalf, I simply wish to give you two news about the group.

First, we have asked an independent consultant to conduct an evaluation of the Ban Advocate initiative. The summary of findings and lessons has been printed, and is available. One of these lessons is that the personal and emotional engagement of the Ban Advocates, made a powerful difference to the way officials and diplomats understood and viewed the ban issue. I warmly recommend you this reading.

The other news is that we are happy to present today the preview of a movie made by British producer Chris Anderson, who followed the group throughout the world. The title of the movie ‘Ban Advocates : from victims to champions’ perfectly reflects the process the survivors went through and the role they are playing today towards a total ban on cluster munitions.

The movie has a duration of 25 minutes, will be released, worldwide on the very symbolic date of 1st of August. We are proud to show you now a shorter version of it.

Mrs Lynn Bradach, from United States, who was part of the adventure, will give you a more personal introduction. Allow me to briefly quote the producer: “Working with the Ban Advocates has not just been a rewarding experience, but a tremendously enjoyable one too. I have been deeply impressed by their commitment to a process that will bring help, hope and change to thousands of people around the world. I have also been touched by the sense of loyalty and camaraderie that they have forged between themselves. It was an honour to have been involved. “

Thanks for your attention.

Due to time limitations, we will not be able to answer your questions now, but will all be happy to do it during the breaks.