

**Cluster Munition Coalition Statement on Stockpile Destruction
Convention on Cluster Munitions 5th Meeting of the States Parties
San José, 3 September 2013**



Thank you Mr. President.

In 2008, when the global community came together to ban cluster munitions, we were motivated by both revulsion over past use of the weapon as well as a strong desire to prevent further harm to civilians. Stockpile destruction is at the core of such prevention – one could even call it “prevention in action.” Destruction of cluster munitions prevents them from being transferred or used, prevents them from taking a civilian’s life, prevents them from taking away a family’s livelihood.

Fortunately, we are seeing such preventive action by many states, both States Parties and even some signatory states. Most States Parties with cluster munition stockpiles are acting quickly and decisively to destroy stocks, without waiting until the 8-year deadline approaches. As the Cluster Munition Monitor 2014 reports, of the 33 States Parties that have stockpiled cluster munitions at some point in time, 19 have already destroyed all of their stockpiles. As of July 2014, a total of 22 States Parties have destroyed close to 1.2 million stockpiled cluster munitions containing nearly 140 million submunitions. This represents the destruction of an impressive 80% of all cluster munitions and 78% of all submunitions declared stockpiled. In 2013 alone, more than 130,000 cluster munitions and 24 million submunitions were destroyed by these and eight other States Parties.

Since the Fourth Meeting of States Parties, we have continued to hear excellent news. Another three States Parties - Denmark, the Former Yugoslav Republic of (FYR) Macedonia, and the United Kingdom - finished destroying their stocks, all an impressive 4 to 6 years ahead of their convention deadline. We heartily congratulate them and the other States Parties that have already finished destruction for their contribution to ridding the world of cluster munitions. We also warmly welcome news from Canada that it has destroyed its entire cluster munition stockpile before even ratifying the Convention. All of these efforts give an inspiring message to the world – we *can* eradicate cluster munitions, and we are doing so, at a remarkable pace.

We are certain that the remaining 14 States Parties with stockpiles will also be able to finish destroying their stocks well before their deadlines. We are encouraged by reports from Germany, Italy, and Japan that they plan to finish destruction by the end of next year. We look forward to hearing more precise information about destruction plans, including a timeframe for completion, from Bulgaria, Croatia, Mozambique, Peru, and Switzerland, as well as from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Spain, who both reported additional stocks after initially declaring completion. We would also like to hear confirmation from Botswana on whether it met its intended destruction goal of February 2013, and we call on Guinea-Bissau to submit its late initial report so we can obtain a picture of its stockpiles. To promote greater transparency and as a good confidence-building measure, we urge all States Parties with remaining stockpiles to hold public destruction events that include the media and civil society in addition to regular reporting on progress made on the path to completion.

Several of the states still working towards their destruction deadlines have expressed a need for international cooperation and assistance. The CMC urges all states in a position to do so to reply positively to such requests so that these states will have no impediments to meeting their Convention

obligations. We have seen over the past years that destruction of cluster munition stocks need not be expensive or technically complicated, so such assistance should be a straightforward matter. As well, some states still outside the convention have signaled a concern about being able to meet the stockpile destruction obligation on their own. We encourage engagement with such states on the possibility of technical or financial support upon joining as part of States Parties' universalization efforts. The CMC's member organizations with technical expertise in stockpile destruction also stand ready to provide support to those states requiring it.

The CMC would also like to take this opportunity to discourage states from using the exemption under Article 3 to retain cluster munitions and submunitions. We do not believe it 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. For those 10 States Parties that are retaining cluster munitions for training and research purposes, we urge them to clarify whether their holdings constitute the "minimum number absolutely necessary for the permitted purposes" as required by the Convention, and to scrupulously report on their past and planned use. We welcome recent news from the UK, Australia, and now Canada that they will not retain any cluster munitions or submunitions, as well as the decision by 17 other former stockpiling states that no retention is necessary.

Mr. President, we would like to conclude by once again congratulating states on their early achievements on stockpile destruction and urging all States Parties and signatories to work hard towards more such accomplishments by the First Review Conference.

Thank you