



Address by the President of the Convention on Cluster Munition (CCM) to the participants of the 7.MSP at the joint Swiss/German reception at Chateau Penthes, 4. September 2017

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Let me start by thanking

- The Swiss Federal Council
- The State Council of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and
- The Executive Council of the City of Geneva,

who have so generously supported this event. Personally I would like to thank my good friend, Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the Conference on Disarmament, to have joined in our project to showcase the important contribution of Civil Society and NGOs in the conception and implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munition.

I am glad that so many of you have followed our joint invitation to finish off this first day of our annual meeting of states parties in this inspiring environment.

I would like to repeat on this occasion that it was a great honor and privilege for Germany and for me personally to have been elected as the President of the CCM and chair of the 7-th MSP. I would like to thank all those who have placed their trust in our conduct of the office and notably those who have so actively supported it during the last year, this regards first and foremost the countries and colleagues represented in the coordination committee, the team of the ISU and the disarmament directorate of UNOG.

Having said this I would like to shift to the focus of this evening and pay tribute to the tireless and courageous work done by Civil Society in general and numerous NGO's for our convention. Most of them are organized under the umbrella of the ICBL-CMC or better known to us as the Cluster Munition Coalition. Without grassroots initiatives like this we probably would not have the CCM today and implementation would be a lot harder. So we wanted to give them a platform tonight to present themselves and their committed work.

When we took over the Presidency we identified a couple of areas and issues where we felt Germany could make a difference when it comes to achieving the overall objectives of the convention. It was our particular desire to engage in activities which we deemed were having the potential to increase the humanitarian purview of the convention and further the goal of universalization. In the end our contacts with civil society and notably the Cluster Munition Coalition helped us to conceive a number of new ideas and put them into action.

One of the ideas we wanted to promote was the setting up of so called Country Coalitions to facilitate implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in an individualized approach. As the CCM does not have a dedicated implementation mechanism to assist countries in need of assistance, we launched an initiative that builds on a country specific approach and comprehensive cooperation. This individualized approach called “country coalitions” shall notably promote mine action, including destruction and clearance of cluster munitions in particularly affected States Parties as well as facilitate improved assistance to victims of cluster munitions and land release, in particular by enhanced coordination of all relevant actors at the country level in a transparent and inclusive manner.

For us it was very rewarding to see this initiative taking shape through a series of informal meetings and seminars, notably the 2 regional seminars in South East Asia and South East Europe. We expect that after the concept phase the Coordination Committee will in the future identify potential target countries and willing states parties to address concrete implementation challenges.

Against the unfortunate trend of rising use and victims from cluster munitions world-wide, as also documented in this year’s cluster munition monitor, we identified as another operational focus the need to improve communication channels with relevant non-States Parties. The objective was to address some current topical challenges regarding mainly recent use, export and presence of cluster munition in military doctrines.

To us it was satisfactory to see that a number of relevant producers and holders of stockpiles acknowledged the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions when used in populated areas. All non-states parties with whom the Presidency met indicated that in case of possible use of cluster munitions there would be a thorough assessment of the proportionality and necessity preceding such a decision. Of the major producers some signaled either a stop of production or thorough consideration of the utility of cluster munitions with regard to the development of future weapons systems.

As many of the non-state parties addressed cited military or security concerns for not acceding to the CCM we proposed a dedicated Military to Military exchange on this issue. A first workshop to share specific experiences of the transition away from cluster munitions was organized as a concrete follow up of the dialogue by the Presidency, together with Switzerland, Austria France, the United Kingdom and the GICHD. The format allowed for an in depth inter-military exchange of views between military personnel. The dialogue was assessed as very useful by all participants and it was proposed to continue with this kind of activity in the future.

As the Presidency we also undertook some specific efforts to promote universalization of the convention and I am glad that we are able to welcome among us representatives from Benin and Madagascar who have joined the convention recently (and from Sri Lanka which has announced its desire to accede today).

Last but not least let me remind you of our overarching objective to achieve a world without any explosive remnants of war. To this end we closely collaborated with the Land Mine Convention and the CCW. I recall in this context the fruitful seminar we jointly organized

with the GICHD on land clearance in the margins of the APMBC-intersessional on 7.June 2017. Let me highlight also in this context the excellent collaboration with GICHD whose extraordinary role in supporting our both conventions cannot be underestimated.

With this I would like to thank you for your attention and turn the floor to Amelie Chayer, Director of the ICBL-CMC, who will say a few word from the perspective of the NGO's assembled under this umbrella. The floor is yours Amelie.