



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

**Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Lusaka, 11 September 2013**

Statement on Universalization

**Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS
on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA)**

Madam President,

I am delivering the following statement on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising the 12 United Nations Departments, Agencies, Funds, and Programmes involved in mine action.

The United Nations joins in congratulating the eight States¹ that have acceded to the Convention since the Third Meeting of States Parties in Oslo. With 83 States parties, the Convention continues its steady progress towards universalization.

With each new State Party more lives are saved, more countries enjoy increased stability, security, and conditions conducive to sustainable development by the release of land for productive use, and increased freedom of movement of populations – in short, the resumption of normal life.

This Conference comes at a time when the world is facing the recent use of cluster munitions, such as in Syria. Universal adherence to the Convention is more important than ever. There must be no compromise to the stigmatization and prohibition of the use of cluster munitions. What seems like a never-ending cycle of violence, destruction, and suffering must stop.

Madam President,

The United Nations Secretary-General has repeatedly called upon States to accede to the Convention as a matter of urgency. It is of particular importance for the United Nations that all countries join the Convention without delay and that those already party to the Convention implement it.

Furthermore, we wish to recall that each State Party has the obligation to encourage States not party to accede to this Convention with the goal of attracting the adherence of all States, in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention.

¹ Andorra, Australia, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chad, Iraq, Liechtenstein, Nauru, Peru,

The United Nations continues to advocate for universalization at all levels – through the UN Secretary-General, the Depositary of the Convention; as well as through the extensive presence of UN staff on the ground, in particular, but not only, when providing support to mine action programmes.

The Strategic Objectives of the UN Strategy on Mine Action 2013-2018 are unambiguous: the momentum to achieve universalisation and full implementation of all relevant treaties and conventions must be sustained, and where possible accelerated. This is paramount to the realization of the global vision of a world free of the threat of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions.

Madam President,

The United Nations maintains that universalisation contributes to preventing proliferation and the use of cluster munitions, and the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

The United Nations also welcomes Zambia's significant initiative to explore how regional approaches can be used to increase the rate of accession and ratification to the Convention.

While significant efforts have been made, the United Nations shares the concerns expressed in the concept paper prepared by Zambia regarding the remaining challenges with regards to universalization and implementation. Particular attention must be given to regional security issues and the costs of implementing the provisions of the Convention, which may have prevented some states from acceding.

The United Nations welcomes and supports Zambia's leadership in universalization efforts and in the development of effective partnerships between states, international organizations and civil society to achieve this goal.

Thank you.