

**CMC STATEMENT – UN FIRST COMMITTEE**  
**23 October 2009**

The Convention on Cluster Munitions was opened for signature on December 2008. Since then already 100 States signed it, and 23 ratified it.

Building on the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, this Convention banning a whole category of unacceptable weapons is a groundbreaking new international instrument, with strong provisions in particular regarding the rights of affected communities and survivors. It is a pragmatic solution to the urgent need to prevent the future proliferation of weapons that have killed and injured so many civilians during the last 40 years. But now we must ensure that it will bring real improvements in the lives of these people in the field. We need first to reach the seven final ratifications to trigger entry into force as early as possible in 2010, and to get further ratifications so that a maximum of countries participate as States Parties in the First Meeting of States Parties to be organised by Lao PDR in November 2010. Next year, various events should pave the way to these common objectives including a global conference to prepare the work of the First Meeting of States Parties, the global celebration of entry into force by civil society and governments alike, and a series of regional conferences to promote adherence to the Convention ahead of its First Meeting of States Parties.

We also urge all signatory States not to wait until entry into force to start the implementation of the Treaty's provisions. Stockpiles can be destroyed now (as many States have started doing already); clearance is already going on and must be accelerated through increased funding from donor countries; victim assistance is a lifelong obligation and affected and donor States must engage immediately and for the long term to ensure the needs of victims are met.

Finally, we hope many other States not already on board will join the treaty very soon, and we are confident that national measures such as those taken by Singapore and the US to unilaterally ban the export of cluster munitions will help to solidify the emerging global norm against this stigmatised weapon.

To achieve these ambitious but achievable goals, the encouraging momentum of these last months around the Convention needs to be maintained, with the increased participation and leadership of survivors, and thanks to the continuous partnership between States, international organisations and civil society that was so crucial in the success of the Oslo Process. On behalf of the members of the Cluster Munition Coalition around the world, let me assure you, that civil society will remain committed and ready to work with all of you in order to reach our common goals.