



Statement by His Excellency Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva at the 1st Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)
Dubrovnik, Croatia, 7 September 2015

Madam Chair,

This first review Conference marks an important date for the Convention on cluster munitions. In this regard, I would like to express the appreciation of the Holy See delegation to you, Madam Chair, and to Croatia for all the good work and the commitment for a successful outcome of this meeting and a new start in the implementation of the obligations that all the States parties accepted in order to preventing the devastating consequences of cluster munitions and to make up for the mistakes of the past. Please also allow me to congratulate Costa Rica for its commitment and leadership, in particular for what concerns the universalization of the Convention.

From the very beginning, the combined efforts and partnerships between the different stakeholders made the CCM an exemplary instrument. It is important to recall and keep in mind the fundamental principles of this Convention: to place the human person, in particular the victims, at the center of our concerns; to continue strengthening the standards; to focus on prevention; not to evade responsibilities and take concrete measures in the implementation of the obligations contracted; to grant the administrative and financial resources to achieve the goals of the Convention.

At present, the greatest challenge for the Convention is to acquire the administrative and financial resources allowing for an effective and efficient implementation. This is a collective responsibility and the burden should be shared fairly. In order to finalize the work, we have begun, a concrete follow up to our commitments is very important. It is also essential to engage in a sincere cooperation between the countries affected and donors. Each State party, each partner of the Convention must be involved and contribute to the proper functioning of the Convention and its bodies. Our meeting today is called to decide upon the financing of the Support Unit and the structure of future meetings. It would be absurd to recur to models that do not function, like the ones we are familiar with in other contexts and greatly affect our work. The State parties to the CCM took on commitments before ensuring the financing sources. We all share the responsibility to devise a fair and equitable model so as not to repeat the unfortunate experience of the Anti-Personnel Land Mines Convention.

The issue of financing is of paramount importance. It has direct implications on the operations and on the effective implementation of the CCM. The universalization of the Convention and of its standards is a priority. The assistance to the countries affected is essential. A balanced and dynamic structure is required to implement the goals of the Convention. For all these reasons, we need a competent, efficient, stable and lasting Support Unit.

The Holy See Delegation is confident that the State Parties to the Convention will carry out their responsibility - individually and collectively - in order to prevent that cluster munitions, become a threat to the life of populations and an obstacle for the socio-economic development of the regions that experienced wars.

As it has always been from the beginning of the Oslo process, the Holy See is firm and determined to contribute to the success of this humanitarian challenge. The work is far from being completed. We all need to make the right decisions in order to prevent the dangers of cluster munitions. We owe it to the victims of the past and to prevent further victims.

Thank you, Madam Chair.