

Reporting

Matias Undurraga Abbott (Chile)

We thank the Government of Germany for hosting the Berlin Conference and its continuous support and cooperation concerning the issue of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus and to raise the international profile of a safe management, secure disposal and destruction of Cluster Munitions stockpiles on a global basis.

We also thank the Norwegian Government for its wisdom and strong lead in the Oslo process, and disarmament and arms control as a whole. Chile participated enthusiastically in the Cluster Munitions Convention Signing Conference last December. Today, we renew our commitment to bring about its entry into force through promotion of its ratification and attracting the adherence of all States to this Convention.

As attested by the Tlatelolco Treaty, Latin America has made a significant contribution to disarmament and international humanitarian law. Our region was the first to host a reach-out Conference within the Oslo process following the February 2007 declaration. And we remain in support of Perú's initiative to consolidate a Latin America Cluster Munitions Free Zone, introduced by the Peruvian Delegation at the Lima Conference (Lima, 23- 25 may 2007). We are confident that this proposal will significantly strengthen the Cluster Munitions Convention.

Reporting remains at the core of any credible arms control/or disarmament instrument. It provides both the starting point and the regular information feeding process of any serious verification mechanism; that is why reporting needs to be thoroughly tackled and implemented from day one. Accordingly, one needs to take stock of existing global and regional instruments addressing questions associated to national holdings and procurement - and which could plausibly include information pertaining to cluster munitions stockpile management practices, its disposal and destructions – to benefit from lessons learned along the “disarmament machinery”. Reporting obligations are mainly contained in Article 7 of the Oslo Convention, but the need for enhanced levels of transparency transpires from the preamble paragraphs and is embedded in the spirit of our treaty.

Given its humanitarian ethos, practical experiences in fulfilling the requirements of article 7 of the Mine Ban Convention will certainly provide us with valuable insights on how to proceed, advance and comply with the Transparency measures contained in article 7 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Among these, allow me to highlight the OAS Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions, which entered into force in November 2002. This Convention is an unprecedented, legally binding transparency regime, requiring its states-parties to annually report on their weapons exports and imports, as well as timely notifying their military acquisitions, whether imported or domestically produced. Its seven weapon-categories mirror those of the voluntary U.N. Register of Conventional Arms, which calls on all countries to annually submit reports on their import and export to the Secretary-General. (In their annual OAS reports, states-parties must identify the type and quantity of the weapons transferred and names the exporting or importing countries. Additional information, such as the designation or model of the weapon, may be provided on a voluntary basis).

We certainly understand the difficulties of adopting a “one –size fits- all” reporting format that can never be perfectly tailored for any individual member country, but credibility of reports remain at the very core of transparency and verification. With respect to accuracy of reports, monitoring tools may vary from periodical reports displayed in public domain sites up to innovative measures to ensure veritable scrutiny, such as the 'challenge inspection' procedure incorporated to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), by which States Parties have committed themselves to the principle of 'any time, anywhere' inspections with no right of refusal. Such an intrusive mechanism is not contemplated in our Convention, which relies mostly on State cooperation (Articles 8 and 10), but State practice can be oriented through effective Review Conferences and inter-sessional work to more demanding levels of actual compliance.

Our own experience in implementing the Mine Ban Treaty provisions is most positive in this regard. We highly value the recommendations about our demining procedures by requesting advice to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian demining - GICHD – and by meticulously sticking to the international mine action standards – IMAS. Our National Demining Commission web page is quite comprehensive (www.cnad.cl) as everyone can witness. We are always open to new advice on how to improve reports and to consider valuable opinions from our civil society.

For example, if based on the provisions of Article 7 of the Oslo Convention Chile had to report today to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, we would state, in general terms that Chile has begun, in accordance with its constitutional requirements and practice, to draft a law initiative (mensaje presidencial /draft bill) under the proposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the consent of the Defence and Finance Ministers, and the approval by the

President of the Republic, to advance the implementation of key provisions contained in the CCM (including of course our stock destruction). This bill draft is being sent to Congress to initiate the legislative process of approval conducive to ratification. As we stated at the Oslo Signing Ceremony we are prepared to host a new Conference to keep momentum and give a new vitality to the ratification process.

As with any multilateral endeavour, real compliance shall rest upon the shoulders of State-Parties. The “community” of our Convention, taking cues from the “community” of the Ottawa Convention, will have ample opportunity to advise, to nudge and, eventually, to pester the Parties in order harvest the global public goods our peoples deserve.