

**Statement of Assistant Secretary Lamberto B. Sillona
During the Berlin Conference on the Destruction of Cluster Munitions
at the Hilton Hotel, Mohrentrasse 30, 10117 Berlin, Federal Republic of
Germany on 25-26 June 2009.**

Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Republic of the Philippines and its people and government, I take this opportunity to add our voices to those who expressed their congratulations and commendations to the Governments of Germany and Norway for their initiatives to make this conference possible.

May I also express the congratulations of my delegation to the distinguished personalities who, on various occasions, chaired and adeptly steered the discussions towards their successful conclusions.

I also express the gratitude of my government to the government of Germany for graciously hosting this conference, and to the UN Development Programme, or UNDP, for graciously opening its doors to make it possible for us to be here and participate in this noble cause.

At this point, Mr. Chair, I wish to emphasize that the Philippines has not procured, stockpiled or used cluster munitions.

Mr. Chair, ratification of international agreements by the Republic of the Philippines is a constitutional requirement involving a meticulous, deliberative legislative process. We cannot hasten this process, and we, of the Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, surrender to the legislative priorities of our Congress. We remain committed, however, to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and its provision are closely adhered to by our government, sans the formal ratification of the Convention. I assure everybody that even now, our Department of National Defense and our Armed Forces are one with our Department of Foreign Affairs in building the momentum so as in due time, we will ratify the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to everyone.