

LIVINGSTONE DECLARATION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Preamble: *the following declaration has been endorsed by the following African States present at the Livingstone Conference on Cluster Munitions: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo (Republic of), Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.*

African States met in Livingstone from March 31 to April 1, 2008, within the framework of the Oslo process to consider effective responses to the humanitarian consequences caused by the use of cluster munitions and the proliferation threat thereof. African States endorsing the Livingstone Declaration on Cluster Munitions:

cognisant that for decades African communities have suffered from the uncontrolled proliferation of conventional weapons to the continent. More than 30 African countries have been contaminated to various degrees by landmines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). Most of them are still facing the challenges this contamination poses to development and human security years after conflicts have ended. Cluster munitions have so far been used in a comparatively low number of countries in Africa;

convinced that by the end of 2008 this solution must include the conclusion of a legally binding international convention prohibiting production, stockpiling, use and transfer of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, with a framework for cooperation and assistance that ensures adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk reduction education, and destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions;

strongly believe that Victim Assistance is an essential component of the treaty, and support strong provisions requiring each state to provide assistance to survivors of cluster munitions their families and communities in care, rehabilitation, economic and social inclusion and participation of survivors in the decision-making processes that affect their lives;

cognisant that several African States have experienced the devastating humanitarian, and developmental effects cluster munitions' cause on children, women and men and their communities;

convinced that it is vital to spare all other African countries from additional contamination and ensure that these weapons are not used in Africa in the future;

cognisant of the devastating effects that cluster munitions pose on humanity and that all harm is unacceptable;

convinced that only a new legally binding convention can prohibit the transfer, stockpiling, production and use of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians as well as prevent Africa from continually being a dumping ground for weapons obsolete in other places;

convinced that African States were crucial in securing the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in 1997. That Convention addressed an acute crisis affecting hundreds of thousands of Africans. A new Cluster Munitions Convention will effectively prevent such a disaster from unfolding again;

encouraged by work done at previous conferences welcome the convening of a Diplomatic Conference by the Government of Ireland in Dublin from May 19th to 30th 2008 to negotiate and adopt such a Convention;

affirm the objective of concluding the negotiation of a new comprehensive convention prohibiting the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians in Dublin in May 2008;

recognise and welcome the efforts made by all participants in the process to establish a new comprehensive convention prohibiting production, stockpiling, transfer and use of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians by the end of 2008;

encourage all African States to endorse the Wellington Declaration on Cluster Munitions and thereby join in their efforts towards concluding such an instrument;

declare that ALL cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm must be subject to the negotiations of a legally binding international convention in Dublin that prohibits their production, stockpiling, transfer and use. Such prohibition should be total and immediate from the convention's entry into force in order to prevent further suffering.