



FINAL REPORT OF THE CARICOM REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

3 - 4 March 2020

St. George's, Grenada

REPORT SUMMARY

The CARICOM Regional Workshop on the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) took place in St. George's, Grenada, from 3 to 4 March 2020, where delegates from 11 CARICOM Member States met to discuss CCM universalization and implementation in the region. The workshop hosted by Grenada and sponsored by Canada was organized with the logistical and technical support of the CCM Implementation Support Unit (ISU). Switzerland in its role as the Presidency of the Second Review Conference (2RC) also participated in the workshop. Workshop resource persons were representatives of Switzerland, the CMC and the ISU.

The workshop was an opportunity to promote the universalization of the CCM to States in the CARICOM region as they are considered to be "low-hanging fruit" since the majority are small states that have never possessed cluster munitions and/or been contaminated by them. This workshop provided the platform for CARICOM States to further their understanding of the Convention and discuss challenges and solutions to joining and implementing it. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the workshop would help Signatory and States not Party undertake efforts towards ratification or accession in the lead up to the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2RC) scheduled to take place in November 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The workshop provided an overview of the Convention's key provisions and outlined the extensive range of technical support, tools and resources available to assist States not yet party in their ratification or accession process and implementation of the treaty thereafter. States Parties were invited to share their experiences in overcoming obstacles to joining and implementing the Convention. Signatory and States not Party in attendance gave updates on the status of any plans to join the Convention and shared the specific obstacles and challenges faced in doing so. Resources and expert advice on the Convention's key operational obligations and on national ratification and domestication were provided to the participants throughout the two days.

The workshop ended with participants detailing how they would take the remaining work forward in the CARICOM region through the adoption of "The St. George's Commitment on Universalization and Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions" (Annex 1).

BACKGROUND

Cluster munitions have killed and injured thousands of civilians for more than 70 years and continue to do so today. The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) is a legal instrument which prohibits all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. It establishes a framework for cooperation and assistance to ensure adequate assistance to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk reduction education, and destruction of stockpiles.

CARICOM Member States acknowledge the important role of peace and disarmament for sustainable development in the region. All 14 CARICOM Member States that are UN members have consistently voted YES for the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the implementation of the CCM since the first such resolution in 2015. Nevertheless, out of these 14 CARICOM States, only 7 are party to the CCM and 2 are Signatories.

The Dubrovnik Action Plan (DAP) adopted by States Parties at the First Review Conference in September 2015 aspires to have 130 States Parties by the Second Review Conference (2RC) in November 2020. As of March 2020, only 121 States have committed to the goals of the CCM, 108 as States Parties and 13 as Signatories. Therefore, an increase in adherence to the Convention in the CARICOM region would be critical for the CCM to reach its 130 States Parties target by the 2RC.

The main goal of the CARICOM Regional Workshop was to give Signatory and States not Party in the region the opportunity to discuss the challenges faced in the ratification or accession process and to exchange concrete ideas on ways to address these and thus accelerate universalization. It is hoped that by the 2RC, a good number of CARICOM States that attended the workshop in Grenada will have become States Parties to the Convention.

Opening Session: Welcoming address and discussion on the objectives of the workshop

A welcoming statement on behalf of the host country was delivered by Mr. Alva Browne, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Grenada, followed by statements from Ms. Aline Berdoz, Presidency of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2RC), and Mr. David Steuerman, Deputy Director of Strategic Policy and Corporate Affairs for Global Affairs Canada.

In his opening statement, **Mr. Alva Browne**, extended a warm welcome to all participants and expressed his gratitude to Switzerland and Canada, the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and the Caribbean Coalition for Development and the Reduction of Armed Violence (CDRAV) for making the workshop possible in Grenada. Mr. Browne declared that it was an honour for Grenada to host the workshop and reconfirmed Grenada's commitment to promote the universalization of the CCM in the region. He highlighted that the CARICOM region was impacted by a wide array of challenges and that disarmament and curbing the proliferation of arms and ammunition would ensure peaceful development in the region. Mr. Browne indicated that the government of Grenada was committed to its responsibilities as a State Party to the CCM and that it recognized the Convention as a significant disarmament treaty that contributed to global peace and security. He added that Grenada would like to see more CARICOM Member States join the CCM and that the workshop was anticipated to help achieve this goal by providing States with strategies and capacities that would lead to ratification or accession. He called all participants to commit to contributing to the universalization of the Convention through the strengthening of partnerships and communication. Mr. Browne concluded his address by stressing the common ties of States in the region and their goals to promote peace and sustainable development both regionally and globally.

Ms. Aline Berdoz representing Switzerland in its role as 2RC Presidency expressed her gratitude to Grenada for hosting the meeting and to Canada for its financial support. She extended her appreciation to the participants—6 out of 7 States Parties from the region, both signatory States, and 3 out of 5 States not Party—adding that this demonstrated the commitment of the CARICOM region towards the CCM and its goals. She explained that the office of the Swiss Presidency began at the end of the Ninth Meeting of States Parties (9MSP) in September 2019 and would terminate at the end of the 2RC, which was scheduled to take place from 23-27 November 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland. Ms. Berdoz pointed out that the Swiss government intended to use the Review Conference as an event to decisively advance the implementation of the CCM and that its aim was to give the Convention a fresh impetus to enhance its political importance. She reminded that achieving the objectives of the Convention was necessarily a joint effort and that Switzerland intended to facilitate an inclusive and transparent process that enabled both States Parties and civil society to contribute substantially to the work of the 2RC. She introduced the priorities of the Swiss Presidency which were to prepare high quality documents such as the Review Document, Political Declaration and the new Action Plan for a successful Review Conference; and the achievement of 130 States Parties, the universalization goal set at the 1RC, so that the humanitarian values of the CCM would be shared globally. Ms. Berdoz also presented the 2 aims of the workshop: the promotion of the Convention and its obligations amongst the participating States and the encouragement of a regional ratification of / accession to the CCM so that the CARICOM would become the second cluster munition free subregion.

Mr. David Steuerman representing Canada expressed his utmost gratitude to Switzerland, the ISU and the CDRAV for partnering with Canada in organizing the workshop and specifically thanked the government of Grenada for graciously hosting the workshop at a short notice. He explained that Canada had been a long-time supporter of the CCM and believed that cluster munitions caused unacceptable harm and should be further stigmatized. He added that the overwhelming majority of cluster munitions victims were civilians and that many of these were children, and that this was why Canada urged all States that had not ratified or acceded to the CCM to do so as a matter of priority. Mr. Steuerman emphasized that increasing adherence to the Convention was vital to continue to reinforce the international norm against this weapon. He highlighted that as a fellow Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS), Canada had an interest in promoting the universalization of the CCM in the CARICOM region. Mr. Steuerman concluded his opening by encouraging participants to take full advantage of the workshop and resources available to seek clarification on the adherence process. He expressed his hope that open and productive discussions would be held during the two-day workshop and that participating States would take the next steps in joining and implementing the Convention.

Session 1:

Overview of the arms control fora in the Caribbean: the importance of gender

Ms. Folade Mutota of the Caribbean Coalition for Development and the Reduction of Armed Violence (CDRAV) introduced the CDRAV as a coalition that worked to reduce and prevent gun violence in the Caribbean and had led the campaign to bolster the CARICOM's role in the negotiations of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). She informed that the global arms trade was worth about USD100 billion annually and that it was important work to get governments to prohibit arms transfers that would contribute to human rights violations. She reminded that the proliferation of illegal weapons across the Caribbean eroded the quality of life for the entire population. Ms. Mutota highlighted the importance of examining armed violence in relation to women's security,

community safety and national development. She recommended that women's participation in the full spectrum of decision making around community safety and arms control needed to be enhanced.

Overview of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Ms. Sheila N. Mweemba, Director of the CCM Implementation Support Unit (ISU), gave a presentation on the history the Convention and an overview of its key provisions and achievements to date. She introduced the CCM as a humanitarian disarmament treaty that contained preventative measures through its prohibitions; remedial measures through stockpile destruction, clearance and victim assistance; and cooperative approaches to implementation through multi-level partnerships. Ms. Mweemba outlined the key operational obligations of the Convention and the current status of their implementation. She pointed out that the key obligations of the Convention would be explained in detail in the subsequent sessions that day. The Director concluded her presentation by explaining the Convention's machinery, the ISU's mandate, key events of the Convention in 2020 and some of the resources and information that are useful to States on the CCM website.

Session 2: Key articles under the CCM

The objective of this session was to provide a more detailed outline of some of the Convention's operational obligations: stockpile destruction (Article 3), clearance (Article 4), victim assistance (Article 5) and reporting (Article 7)

Swiss representative **Ms. Aline Berdoz** presented on her country's national experience in **stockpile destruction** to illustrate how compliance is achieved under Article 3 of the Convention. She began by outlining the definition of a "cluster munition" as stipulated by Article 2.2 and comparing those to the cluster munition systems that were in the Swiss stockpiles that were to be disposed of and declassified. Ms. Berdoz went on to illustrate how Article 3 was operationalized, first of all, by how cluster munitions were physically and electronically separated as "marked for destruction". She then explained that States Parties could utilize different destruction methods such as contracting private companies, exporting to another State Party for disposal, and open detonation by the State's own military; and that Switzerland had opted for a public tender and selected a private company in Germany. She discussed the safety, security and data management considerations that Switzerland undertook in transferring and transporting its stockpiles to Germany for destruction. She also discussed how quality assurance was carried out according to specific national standards and how national legislation and military documents and training were adapted to comply with the CCM. In further explaining Article 3 obligations, Ms. Berdoz clarified that Article 3.6 allowed for limited retention of cluster munitions and that Switzerland had done so for the purposes of surveillance of transportation safety until stockpile destruction was completed and also for development of countermeasures. She added that Switzerland would be reporting a reduction in retained cluster munitions in its 2019 annual transparency report.

In his presentation on **clearance**, Assistant Commissioner of the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF), **Mr. Jessmon Prince**, narrated that after acceding to the Convention in June 2011, Grenada informed the CCM community of its urgent need to rid its territory of cluster munitions which were dropped during the US invasion in 1983. On 31 January 2012, the government of Grenada formally requested support from Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) to conduct a survey of suspected areas. Following that, with the financial support of the Norwegian government, NPA conducted non-technical and technical surveys in Grenada from 23-30 June 2012 and found no evidence of cluster munitions in the assessed area. Additionally, there had been no sightings or incidents related to cluster munitions

since the 1983 US invasion. The area of concern had been developed into a residential community and there was no fear of using the area among the local population. Furthermore, the technical survey by NPA of a random sample of approximately 5% of the area of concern found no cluster munition remnants. NPA made all reasonable efforts to identify areas that could have been contaminated by cluster munition remnants through interviews with the local population, the RGPF, the Grenadian government and the US Embassy. In a letter dated 16 July 2012, NPA recommended to the Grenadian government that it was confident that Grenada was in a position to declare itself in full compliance with Article 4 of the CCM. On 11 September 2012 Grenada formally declared at the Third Meeting of States Parties (3MSP) that it had fulfilled its obligations under Article 4 of the Convention.

Presenting on **victim assistance**, a representative of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), **Ms. Natalia Morales**, started by highlighting that cluster munitions cannot discriminate among targets, cause unacceptable harm to civilians and when used contamination is widespread and has a long-term impact. The estimated global all-time cluster munition casualties is between 56,000 to 86,000. During the 10-year period (2009-2018) of Cluster Munition Monitor reporting, 4,128 new casualties were recorded. In 2018, 99% of casualties were civilians and the majority (52%) were children. Ms. Morales pointed out that the CCM was the first multilateral treaty to make the provision of assistance to victims of a specific weapon a formal obligation for all States Parties. Obligations listed under Article 5.2 required States Parties with cluster munition victims to implement specific activities to ensure that adequate assistance is provided. Thereafter, Ms. Morales detailed the key components of victim assistance as including medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, social-economic reintegration, data collection and laws and policies. She gave a summary of the objectives of the Dubrovnik Action Plan (DAP) for victim assistance. In conclusion, Ms. Morales emphasized that by joining the CCM States would be sending a message to the international community that the use of cluster munitions needed to be stopped and its humanitarian consequences should not be tolerated under any circumstance.

Ms. Elaine Weiss, Implementation Support Assistant with the ISU, made a presentation on **reporting** as required by CCM Article 7. She provided a practical overview on reporting obligations with a thorough explanation on the two types of transparency reports to be submitted by States Parties: initial and annual. To this end, States were guided through the standard reporting formats and provided with information on the support available to facilitate this obligation. The presentation further focused on the importance of timely and qualitative reporting as an indication of a State Party's commitment to the Convention. Ms. Weiss emphasized that reporting was also an opportunity to access available resources through international cooperation and assistance as described under Article 6 of the Convention. She concluded her presentation by discussing the reporting status of States Parties of the CARICOM region.

Session 3: Addressing national ratification and domestication of the CCM

CMC representative, **Ms. Natalia Morales**, made a presentation on the process of **ratification** of or **accession** to the CCM and the obligation of States Parties to implement the Convention domestically. She clarified that the Convention was open for signature from 3 December 2008 until its entry into force on 1 August 2010, 6 months after it was ratified by 30 States. Thereafter, to be bound by the CCM, only signatory States could ratify, and non-signatories would have to accede to it. She further explained that to become party to the CCM a State must formally declare its consent to be bound by the agreement and that this would normally involve two principal steps: action by the national government and a notification to the depositary. Ms. Morales went on to present the

Model instrument of ratification and the *Model instrument of accession* that had been prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and informed that the Convention would enter into force for the State on the 1st day of the 6th month after it had deposited the instrument of ratification or accession. The State could also make a declaration of intent to apply the Convention provisionally if it chose to do so.

In the second half of her presentation, Ms. Morales focused on **national implementation measures** as obligated by Article 9 of the CCM. She elucidated that when implementing the Convention by national legislation, a State Party may choose to enact a stand-alone legislation and/or amend an existing legislation. She outlined the elements to consider including in national implementation legislation, such as penal sanctions, definitions, the key obligations under the Convention, the right to seek assistance from other States as well as clarification procedure. Ms. Morales explained that in addition to legal measure, States Parties are required to adopt administrative measures such as adjusting the military doctrine and operating procedures, notifying the arms industry and other positive measures to ensure full implementation of the CCM nationally. She ended her presentation by introducing (a) the comprehensive model legislation developed by the ICRC for Common Law States; and (b) the simplified model of legislation developed by New Zealand for small States not possessing cluster munitions or contaminated by them.

Session 4: International Cooperation and Assistance: Available resources and how to access them

The session commenced with a presentation by the ISU Director, Ms. Sheila N. Mweemba, on international cooperation and assistance provisions contained in Article 6 of the Convention, how to request cooperation and assistance, and other existing mechanisms and tools available to States. This was followed by a presentation by Swiss representative, Ms. Aline Berdoz, on the case of Switzerland as a provider of international cooperation and assistance to mine action projects worldwide.

Ms. Sheila Mweemba highlighted that Article 6 stipulates that States Parties in a position to do so should provide the technical, material or financial assistance to States Parties affected by cluster munitions through different avenues. Article 6 also requires cooperation between States Parties giving and receiving assistance to ensure full and prompt implementation of agreed assistance programmes. Reference was made to Action 5 of the DAP which emphasizes the strengthening of partnerships at all levels, communication of challenges and seeking of assistance, constructive response to assistance requests and utilization of existing tools for cost efficiency and effectiveness. States Parties requiring international cooperation and assistance were encouraged to do so through Article 7 reporting, participation in Convention Meetings, enhanced partnerships such as the establishment of country coalition, and timely communication to thematic coordinators or the ISU. Ms. Mweemba listed a number of civil society organizations as valuable resource to States and informed that many of them had good in-country networks, more leverage in certain circumstances and that they provided training to States. To conclude this session, she drew the States' attention to the multiple resources including the ratification/accession toolkit, model legislation, reporting templates and other CCM-related publications that could be found on the Convention's website.

Representing Switzerland, **Ms. Aline Berdoz**, reiterated that Switzerland was committed to a world without anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war which was outlined in the Confederation's Mine Action Strategy that was part of its foreign policy priorities. Switzerland provided funding of approximately 16-18 million Swiss Francs annually to support mine action projects internationally and was among the fifteen largest mine action donor countries in the

world. She explained that about half of these funds were channelled to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) that worked for the reduction of the humanitarian impact of mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. Switzerland's Mine Action Strategy encompassed risk reduction education, clearance of contaminated land, victim assistance that included rehabilitation and socioeconomic reintegration of survivors, and the advocacy for a total ban on mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. Ms. Berdoz added that in order to implement its Mine Action Strategy, Switzerland worked closely with non-governmental organizations such as the Geneva Call, the CMC and the ICRC.

Session 5: The experience of Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent & the Grenadines in adhering to and implementing the CCM

The aim of this session was to allow selected States Parties to share their experience in joining and implementing the Convention as a means to encourage and support other States to follow their example.

Assistant Commissioner of the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF), **Mr. Jessmon Prince**, pointed out that Grenada was the only country in the CARICOM region where cluster munitions had been used. According to information the Grenadian government had obtained from the United States government, 21 MK-20 Rockeye cluster munitions were dropped during the 1983 invasion of Grenada. Grenada acceded to the CCM in June 2011. In its initial transparency report submitted in April 2012, it notified of its suspected cluster munition contaminated area and requested for international cooperation and assistance. Consequently, in June 2012, NPA had sent both a non-technical and a technical team to conduct a survey and subsequently declared that Grenada was cleared of its cluster munition remnants. Grenada was able to formally report of its Article 4 compliance at the Third Meeting of States Parties in September 2012 and in its following annual transparency report submitted in April 2013.

In his presentation, **Mr. Michael Penny**, Foreign Service Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of St. Kitts and Nevis, illustrated that the process of accession began with Cabinet Submission 017/2013 that was dated 13 February 2013, which was approved on 22 July 2013. The government of St. Kitts and Nevis deposited its instrument of accession to the United Nations in New York on 13 September 2013 and the CCM entered into force for it on 1 March 2014 making it State Party no. 84. Saint Kitts and Nevis maintained that it had never used, produced, transferred, or stockpiled cluster munitions, as was reported in its initial transparency report in December 2015. It had also submitted all its annual transparency reports thereafter including its 2019 annual report on 3 January 2020. Furthermore, Saint Kitts and Nevis had taken legal administrative and other measures to implement the CCM nationally which included the imposition of penal and financial sanctions through a standalone legislation, the *Cluster Munitions (Prohibition) Act 2014*, enacted on 18 August 2014. This legislation also prohibits investment of funds in development or production of cluster munitions. Mr. Penny also shared about his personal experience as the national focal point on the Convention from the start of the process of accession and highlighted the vital role of the national focal point in ensuring that a State joined and implemented the CCM.

SOP Benzil Samuel, Superintendent of Police of the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force, began his presentation by outlining that his government had signed the CCM on 23 September 2009, ratified on 29 October and became a State Party on 1 April 2011. While Saint Vincent and the Grenadines did not participate in the Oslo Process that created the Convention in 2008, it had decided to sign the CCM in 2009. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had never participated in a CCM Meeting of States Parties or Review Conference but had attended a regional

meeting on the cluster munitions in Santiago, Chile, in September 2009. It had only submitted its initial transparency report on 29 April 2012, therein it reported that it did not stockpile cluster munitions and had no contaminated areas and that its national implementation measures were “pending”. SOP Samuel added that his government was also a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty, the Convention on Conventional Weapons and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Session 6: Updates from delegations on status regarding the CCM

The purpose of this session was to give the other State representatives an opportunity to provide an update on their current position and plans to ratify or accede to the CCM or their current status of implementation of the Convention. It was also an opportunity for all State participants to share challenges encountered, lessons learnt, best practices and to learn from the experience of others as well as seek clarification or advice from one another or from the various resource persons present. In this context, the representatives of Bahamas, Barbados, Saint Lucia, Haiti, and Jamaica shared information on their respective national processes related to the ratification of / accession to the Convention, while the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago reported on their respective implementation status of the CCM.

An area of extensive discussion that arose was on national implementation measures and whether measures such implementing the CCM through one’s anti-terrorism act of explosives act would be robust enough to counter the issue of smuggling and brokering which was of particular concern to CARICOM States as they were mostly small island states. It was recommended that export control laws had to be considered in order to address this issue legally.

Session 7: Working Groups – Exchange of ideas on how to best overcome obstacles to the ratification / accession and practical implementation of the CCM

Participants were divided into two groups to discuss in detail the individual opportunities and challenges that were faced in the ratification / accession process and to thereafter identify possible ways to overcome these.

Participants were divided into the following groups: (1) Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, and Jamaica; (2) Grenada, Haiti, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago. Group 1 was moderated by Canada and the ISU Director while Group 2 by Switzerland, the CMC and another ISU staff. Each working group was encouraged to consider the following elements:

1. What are the challenges to ratification / accession?
2. What are the possible solutions to these challenges?
3. How can external actors assist you in this process?
4. What are the recommended next steps?

Session 8: Report back from the working groups

From the working group exercises, the following were the key challenges identified and best practices or actions discussed for possible replication.

Challenges

1. CCM not considered a priority issue of governments in the region
2. Political instability in some states
3. Burden of identifying key stakeholders or focal points at the national level
4. Lack of continuity or succession planning during changeover of staff / government
5. Difficulty in getting certain government departments to understand the importance of the Convention
6. Burden of reviewing and amending national legislation to domesticate the CCM

Possible solutions

1. Arrange for ratification / accession to coincide with a major event that involves heads of government
2. Work with CCM 2RC President to organize for a special event at the 2RC to get the universal ratification / accession of the region
3. Apply political pressure to get political will
4. Align the CCM with related issues and topics such as the Mine Ban Treaty and ATT, bring up the issue that these weapons could be diverted to the illicit market and used by non-state actors that would have grave adverse effect on civilians
5. Prepare a submission at the ministerial level to highlight issues related to the use of cluster munitions
6. Ensure that there are both legal and technical advisors in the government to further the Convention's agenda
7. Establish cross-regional or sub-regional working groups on the CCM, such as the Commonwealth and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
8. Utilize pre-existing model legislation
9. Create and maintain a Point of Contact (PoC), which is a department, and appoint a focal point, an individual, for the purpose of the CCM
10. Utilize virtual work group platforms, such as SharePoint, to further the functional collaborative effort

Assistance needed from external actors

1. Legal drafters needed to work on reviewing and drafting legislation in different jurisdictions
2. Legal drafters needed to attend government meetings to initiate ratification / accession process
3. Civil society engagement to promote awareness of issues related to the CCM that target the gaps in the region, e.g., gender equality

Recommended next steps

1. Establishment of a regional online working group
2. Development of a regional project supported by governments of the region to champion disarmament and multilateralism
3. Pursuit of the CCM as an agenda item in the next Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) meeting
4. Garnering of assistance from the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS) to advocate for the CCM
5. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to champion this issue with other heads of government as a current member of the United Nations Security Council
6. Identification of a focal person / volunteer to be the focal person to bolster the process of ratification / accession
7. Encouraging action amongst high level government officials

Session 9: Next steps to achieving universalization and implementation of the CCM

After representatives of the working groups had reported on their respective group findings, participants discussed and agreed upon 4 practical steps that they would undertake after the workshop:

1. Set up a timeline for reporting back about the meeting
2. Set up an online platform that included all the participants of this workshop
3. Grenada to advocate for the St. George's Commitment to be included in the agenda of the CARICOM Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs
4. ICRC to assist drafters through a dedicated regional technical workshop

Closing Session: Summary and closing remarks

The seminar was concluded with final thoughts provided by representatives from the governments of Switzerland, Canada and Grenada.

Representing the 2RC Presidency, **Ms. Aline Berdoz**, reconfirmed Switzerland's commitment to continue working with States in the region and international partners to ensure that States were provided with the necessary guidance and support to join and implement the CCM. Ms. Berdoz conveyed her gratitude to the participants for their active exchanges during this workshop. She expressed her hope that each delegate would endeavor to bring the contents of the discussions and tools available to the attention of the decision makers in their countries. She stated that the Presidency looked forward to receiving reports of ratification and accession from the countries represented in the lead up to the 2RC and welcomed delegates themselves to share the good news at the 2RC. In closing, Ms. Berdoz extended her deep gratitude to the government of Grenada for hosting this workshop as well as to the government of Canada for its financial contribution. She also thanked the ISU for all the organization work undertaken before and during the workshop.

Mr. David Steuerman expressed Canada's sincere thanks to the government of Grenada for kindly hosting the workshop. He commended all State and organization representatives for their frank and open discussions and expressed his hope that future CCM workshops in the region would be able to build upon the commitments made during this workshop. While recognizing the many challenges faced by States in the region in joining and implementing the Convention, he pointed out that the contacts and network created during the workshop would provide a forum to brainstorm solutions and help identify concrete next steps. He encouraged all participants in the workshop to keep the momentum going and follow up swiftly with relevant stakeholders in capital to reinvigorate efforts to achieve greater adherence to the Convention. Mr. Steuerman concluded his address by conveying his appreciation to the 2RC Presidency, the CMC and the ISU for their valuable contribution to the workshop.

In his closing statement, **Mr. Alva Browne** reiterated Grenada's support and commitment to the CCM and expressed his hope that the workshop would be the first step in collective efforts towards the universalization and full implementation of the CCM in the CARICOM region. He conveyed his gratitude to Canada for its generosity and to the 2RC Presidency and the ISU for partnering with his colleagues in making the workshop a success. He thanked all the participants wholeheartedly and congratulated them for producing the St. George's Commitment. In his parting words, Mr. Browne communicated his anticipation for the CARICOM region to become a cluster munition free one and encouraged all the participants from CARICOM member states to continue their work in ensuring that the commitments made at the workshop are fulfilled.

ANNEX 1

CARICOM Regional Workshop on the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) St George's, Grenada March 3-4, 2020

THE ST. GEORGE'S COMMITMENT ON UNIVERSALIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Background:

The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a legal instrument which prohibits all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. It establishes a framework for cooperation and assistance to ensure adequate assistance to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk reduction education, and destruction of stockpiles.

Eleven representatives of Caribbean State Parties participated in the Workshop. Six states Parties (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago), two Signatory States (Haiti and Jamaica) and three States not Party (Bahamas, Barbados and Saint Lucia).

These representatives convened in St George's, Grenada on March 3 – 4, 2020 at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Grenada in collaboration with the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (ISU-CCM) and the Caribbean Coalition for Development and the Reduction of Armed Violence (CDRAV). The Governments of Canada and Switzerland provided support for the workshop.

The participants discussed the Convention on Cluster Munitions from a regional perspective and examined challenges and solutions to joining the 2008 Convention. Furthermore, it explored ways of helping states to undertake efforts towards ratification or accession in the lead up to the Second Review Conference of States Parties that will take place in November 2020 in Switzerland.

Member States of CARICOM have played a strong role in promoting multilateralism, and have advocated for peace, security and development for our people and the Region. Participants acknowledge the important role the region can play by contributing to the universalisation of the Convention.

Participants agreed on the need to stay in close touch in the lead up to Second Review Conference of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions that will take place in November 2020 in Switzerland and committed to undertake the following actions: -

Acknowledging the political commitment of CARICOM in the promotion of the Caribbean as a zone of peace, States expressed their support for cooperative and collaborative efforts in the following actions in line with the norms outlined in the Convention:

To universalize the Convention on Cluster Munitions

We the States commit to increase adherence to the Convention and to promote the universalization of the Convention through continued outreach and engagement with States not party in all appropriate fora.

We will endeavour to take every opportunity at national, regional, hemispheric and global fora to reinforce the norms being established by the Convention so that there is a marked decrease in reported, alleged and confirmed instances of use, with the objective to bring to an end the suffering and adverse humanitarian impact and effect caused by cluster munitions.

To advance cooperation and assistance

We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen partnerships at all levels by communicating challenges and seeking assistance at a regional and international level to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

At the country level, we endeavour to demonstrate a high-level national ownership in fulfilling the Convention's obligations.

The States will endeavour to utilise the available human, financial and material resources to efficiently implement these obligations.

To promote Convention compliance

We will endeavour to participate more fully in the work of the Convention and reaffirm our commitment to the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

To ensure national implementation

We encourage the enactment of new legislation or the review of existing national legislation.

Also acknowledging the common challenges transcending CARICOM States in ratifying/acceding and implementing the obligations of the Convention, participants present expressed their support for the recommendations below to enhance universalisation and effective implementation of the Convention goals:

1. Sensitisation on importance of ratification/accession of CCM at all levels domestically (especially the high levels), including Parliament
2. Designation of a national focal point to coordinate the implementation of the CCM
3. Improving coordination amongst national stakeholders
4. Engaging CARICOM Secretariat and Civil Society on the promotion of the Convention
5. Mobilisation of resources at national, regional and international levels
6. That all CARICOM Member States leverage the CCM Sponsorship Programme funds to facilitate participation at the Second Review Conference of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions that will take place from 23 to 27 November 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland.