

Statement by the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Chile,
Senator Eugenio Tuma,
To the meeting of the Standing Committees of the Convention on Cluster Munitions,
Geneva, June of 2011

Chairman, Your Excellencies, dear friends of the Cluster Munitions Coalition,

I appreciate the opportunity to address you in my capacity as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Chile, to inform you that the Chilean Senate has ratified unanimously the Convention on Cluster Munitions in May last year. The Convention then entered into force the 1st of June of this year.

The process of ratification was made possible thanks to the significant momentum, support and participation of the CMC of Chile, who provided additional information to the Congress to decide on the ratification allowing our country to become a State Party to the Oslo Convention.

Dear Chairman, Chile is an affected country and we feel morally obliged to support this Convention given that we used to be producers and exporters of cluster munitions.

In this context, 29 workers died in January 25, 1985, after one of these bombs went off in the production line. This case shows the lethal risk that these munitions pose from the exact moment of its production.

At this moment, Chile has a stock of munitions that will begin to be destroyed when the technical studies that we are carrying out ensure that the destruction can be done safely.

We would like to express our solidarity with the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Lebanon and all of those countries that have suffered the consequences of such weapons. Chile has decided to support the process leading to the 2nd conference of States Parties to the Oslo Convention that will take place in the Republic of Lebanon.

I would like to conclude dear Chairman, by reiterating the value of the contribution of parliamentary diplomacy to the strengthening of the multilateral system of human security, in which the humanitarian dimension gives a sense of solidarity and ethics to the process of law making and the establishing of global and regional legal standards.

Thank you very much.