



## **Colombia commits to ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions by the Dubrovnik Conference**

**Bogotá, 11th August 2015.-** Yesterday in a meeting with the director of the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), Megan Burke, and the director of the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines (CCBL), Álvaro Jiménez, the Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos, announced that Colombia will ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions by the time of the First Review Conference of the Convention, which will be hosted by Croatia in Dubrovnik on 7-11 September 2015.

The president manifested his disposition to arrive to Croatia as the 94th State party of the Convention, after the Colombian Congress approved the ratification on 2012 and the Constitutional Court did the same on 2013.

“I am delighted about the commitment made by President Santos. We look forward to welcoming Colombia as a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in the coming weeks,” said the director of the Cluster Munition Coalition, Megan Burke.

The First Review Conference of Convention will take place five years after the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions took place in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The conference will adopt a five-year action plan and a political declaration to ensure the effective implementation, and full universalization of the Convention.

“In Dubrovnik we want to say out loud that the cluster bombs are not acceptable because they are a weapon against the Humanitarian International Law that causes an indiscriminating effect to the civilians. Moreover, we want to send a strong message to the international community against the use of this weapon in any part of the world and under any circumstance, especially, in Syria, Yemen, Ukraine, Sudan and Libya, where its use had been proved recently”, she added.

Burke, who also leads the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) congratulated the president for the de-mining pilot agreed in March between the Government and FARC guerrillas and expressed the ICBL's disposition to help to expedite the process.

In that sense, the Colombian president proposed a coordinated international forum about the last technological developments in de-mining to study their uses in the topographic Colombian variety.

In the same way, the director of the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Álvaro Jiménez, reiterated his support to the de-mining pilot that is ongoing in the small village of

El Orejón (municipality of Briceño, Antioquia) between soldiers of the Humanitarian De-mining Battalion and the explosives experts from the FARC guerrillas, with the technical support of the Norwegian People's Aid organization.

“This pilot has all the support from the ICBL. In fact, Norwegian People's Aid, as a directive member of the ICBL, it is a relevant actor of the process, as the Government and FARC guerrillas have considered. We expressed our support to the president and, at the same time, we told him our wish to extend the pilot and add the ELN guerrillas in the moment that the Government starts a negotiation process with them”, explained Jiménez.

The director of CCBL highlighted the president's support to the idea that CCBL becomes a national de-mining operator, which would integrate FARC and Army members prepared for it.

“This goal, in the president terms is music for his ears, in the sense that the purpose of peace process is to create reconciliation dynamics. The CCBL has said that is disposed to do that and in order to achieve it, it will ask the international community to support this initiative”, concluded Jiménez.

#### **Context about the Colombian process of ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munition**

Colombia signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 3 December 2008. In November 2009, Colombia announced the completion of the destruction of its cluster munitions stockpile. It has not reported retaining any cluster munitions.

Law 1604 approving ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was enacted on 12 December 2012, concluding a lengthy process of legislative approval. In 2013, the ratification legislation underwent a Constitutional Court review to ensure its compliance with the Constitution of Colombia.

After Paraguay's ratification in March 2015, Colombia remains the only Latin American signatory to the Convention. Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela are the only four Latin American countries that have not joined the Convention on Cluster Munitions yet.

To date 117 nations have joined the Convention, of which 93 are States Parties, and the remaining 24 including Colombia are signatories that have yet to ratify the Convention.

#### **For interviews to Megan Burke:**

megan@icblcmc.org

Contact by Whatsapp: (+1) 4133160198

**For more information:**

Álvaro Jiménez Millán, CCBL Director

[alvaro@colombiasinminas.org](mailto:alvaro@colombiasinminas.org)

(+57) 3103221530

Irene Urango, Communication  
Coordinator CCBL

[info@colombiasinminas.org](mailto:info@colombiasinminas.org)

(+57) 3125858171