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United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meetings 2022
Statement under agenda item 3a – Universalization

Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva Office, UNMAS

Mr. President¹,

As this is the first time I am taking the floor, please allow me to congratulate you and the United Kingdom on assuming the Presidency of the Tenth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. You can count on our full support and cooperation.

Mr. President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities involved in mine action.²

Excellencies,

The United Nations welcomes the commitment of the United Kingdom to strengthening diplomatic efforts to address the grave humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions.

¹ Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Conference on Disarmament, Aidan Liddle.

² The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.



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Distinguished Delegates,

Less than one year ago, the States Parties to this Convention met in Geneva under the Presidency of Switzerland to take stock of the progress they and the Convention had made over the preceding five years. In the Lausanne Action Plan, 110 States Parties acknowledged that increased efforts are required to advance towards the essential objective of a world free of cluster munitions.

Excellencies,

The use of cluster munitions in recent and ongoing armed conflicts by states not party to this convention and their severe humanitarian impact, especially in populated areas, constitute a grave concern.

Mr. President,

Universal adherence is now more important than ever.

The world is watching with shock, horror, and grave concern the (ongoing) war in Ukraine. Very soon after the war had started, there were unconfirmed, yet credible, reports of cluster munition use that has led to civilian casualties and destroyed civilian infrastructure. This includes ground-launched cluster munitions fired from multiple-launch rocket systems in populated areas. The use of these highly inaccurate systems that disperse multiple munitions and sub-munitions over a wide area can have foreseeable indiscriminate effects when used in a populated area.

The United Nations reiterates its call for an immediate end to the use of such weapons, underscoring that any intentional targeting of civilians or civilian infrastructure is a violation of international humanitarian law.



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Mr. President,

The United Nations echoes your call for universalization and encourages all States Parties to engage in the advocacy required to achieve universalization. The United Nations also applauds the Government of the United Kingdom for organizing, with the support of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the African Regional Universalization Workshop in March, and the Governments of Nigeria and Switzerland for co-hosting it.

The United Nations is already supporting States Parties to implement their treaty obligations and remains ready to further support states to comply with the Convention and encourages states to provide additional funding.

Lastly, the United Nations particularly encourages those states that have taken the first important step of signing the Convention to now reaffirm their determination to end the suffering caused by cluster munitions by ratifying the treaty without further delay.

Thank you.

END