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**United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**  
**Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meetings 2022**  
**Statement under agenda item 3e – International Cooperation and Assistance**

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

Mr. President<sup>1</sup>,

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

Excellencies,

The United Nations commends the efforts of states affected by cluster munitions contamination and of donors working towards a world free of these inhumane and deadly weapons. However, further progress in the implementation of this Convention is critical now more than ever.

Mr. President,

While the number of casualties from cluster munitions remains small as a percentage of the total number of explosive ordnance casualties, which in itself is an indication of the success of the Convention, the United Nations is concerned that the Cluster Munitions Monitor is reporting an increase in casualties. Globally, 360 new cluster munition casualties were recorded in 2020, killing 107 people and leaving at least 242 injured.<sup>3</sup> This marks a continuing increase from the updated annual totals of 2019 (14% increase) and 2018 (30% increase). This in a context where victim assistance has been severely under-resourced for years.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> The survival status for 11 casualties was unknown.



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Excellencies,

Regional and international cooperation is particularly crucial to ensure that States Parties that have been granted an Art. 4 extension can meet their clearance deadlines.

Mr. President,

The protection of civilians from cluster munitions and other explosive ordnance remains a priority for the United Nations, as envisioned in its Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, in particular, plays a fundamental role in the protection of civilians. The United Nations supports risk education programmes specific to and tailored to the local threats.

The United Nations is also committed to assist states in clearance.

Mr. President,

Despite these ongoing efforts, the United Nations remains significantly concerned by the use of cluster munitions by states not party to this Convention.

Between August 2020 and July 2021<sup>4</sup>, there have been credible, yet often unconfirmed, reports of cluster munitions use in the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as most recently in the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The Monitor reports that half of all cluster munition casualties in 2020 were recorded in Syria.<sup>5</sup>

Sixteen countries not party to the Convention still produce cluster munitions or reserve the right to do so.

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<sup>4</sup> ICBL-CMC: Cluster Munition Monitor 2021, available at [Cluster-Munition-Monitor-2021\\_web\\_Sept2021.pdf \(the-monitor.org\)](#), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> UNMAS Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), based on reports from humanitarian actors.



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Mr. President,

Stronger collective efforts are urgently needed to accelerate the universalization of this international instruments.

The United Nations remains ready to further support on this crucial endeavor.

Thank you.