



UK Mission
Geneva

**CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS
SECOND REVIEW CONFERENCE**

AGENDA ITEM 15: CLOSURE OF THE REVIEW CONFERENCE

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM

H.E. Mr Aidan Liddle, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 21 September 2021

Mr President,

We are all now painfully aware of the difficulties the COVID-19 pandemic has brought. I want to begin therefore by paying tribute to you and the outgoing Swiss Presidency team for your exceptional leadership throughout this unprecedented period, and for taking on this responsibility for an additional year. With the superb support of the Implementation Support Unit, the Secretariat, and the Coordinating Committee, you have successfully overcome the challenges of scheduling, restrictions on meeting in person, and reaching decisions within the forum, all while ensuring progress on work within the Convention. I thank you for persevering to set the Convention back on track before passing the torch onto us. We indeed have big shoes to fill!

Let me also congratulate H.E. Mr Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa of Iraq on his designation as President of the 11th Meeting of States Parties. I look forward to working closely with him and with all the members of the Coordination Committee over the coming year.

Mr President,

It is an honour for the United Kingdom to take on the Presidency of the 10th Meeting of States Parties of our Convention. Cluster munitions can have a devastating humanitarian impact on civilian populations, both at the time of use and subsequently. Unexploded sub-munitions threaten the lives of civilians and hamper post-conflict reconstruction and development for years afterwards. Yesterday, I had the honour to deliver a statement reaffirming my country's determination to put an end to the suffering caused by cluster munitions, and our commitment to this

important Convention. As Presidency, we will have the responsibility to put this commitment into action.

During our Presidency, our focus will be on the following objectives: pursuing the universalisation of the Convention; exploring alternative financing for action against cluster munitions; and delivering the mandate States Parties have entrusted us with to take our Convention forward.

On universalisation, all of us here today have committed to work to end the suffering caused by Cluster Munitions, including by universalising adherence to the Convention. We can be proud of the efforts that have been made to that end. And yet, 74 States remain outside of this Convention. The United Kingdom will work with the Universalisation Coordinators and the ISU to implement regional approaches to promote the work of the Convention, and to encourage accession and ratification. Great work has already been carried out by past Presidencies and our joint coordinators to understand and analyse the barriers some States face in joining the Convention. This year, we will build on this work by engaging with States not party to the Convention to work through these barriers and to find appropriate solutions to bring more countries on board.

Across the world, thousands of people work tirelessly to clear cluster munitions, mines, and other explosive remnants of war, many of them working for NGOs based in the United Kingdom. The British Government has long been a major donor to this work, and I pay tribute to their ongoing bravery and dedication.

Nonetheless, funding shortfalls continue to limit progress on clearance of cluster munitions in many countries with contamination. In our earlier statement, the UK touched on the research we have undertaken with Social Finance and the HALO Trust to address these shortfalls. This identified three key possible models for innovative mine action finance: outcomes finance (including impact bonds), public-private partnerships, and front-loaded funding. Each of these models has benefits and disadvantages, which must be taken into account on a country-by-country basis. This research informs that there is no 'one-size fits all' approach that can be taken on mine action innovative financing but that there are many key stakeholders in the sector willing to pull together and work to find the best solution. As such, the UK is keen to start applying the findings of this research in countries where there is known interest (such as Cambodia) in order to trial not only the solutions themselves but also our decision-making capability when it comes to selecting the most appropriate model.

In Cambodia, we are in the process of setting up a workshop with interested stakeholders. This will include, among others, donor countries, implementing partners, the UK Embassy in Cambodia and the Cambodian Mine Action Authorities. This approach was proposed following the case study published by Social Finance

and the HALO Trust. The workshop will be used to explore ideas, actions, and next steps. We want to use this research to improve our approach to mine action innovative financing and facilitate more effective programming, thereby delivering enhanced support to those most at risk from landmines and cluster munitions.

In March 2022, the UK will hold a conference at Wilton Park to look at how to achieve more innovative and effective funding models for mine action from public and private sectors. The Wilton Park event will bring together experts from the mine action and development finance sectors to consider which models are worth pursuing in particular countries. We will use the findings from the workshop and subsequent activity in Cambodia to propose to States Parties next steps in progressing this objective.

At this Review Conference, we have agreed to resume the practice of holding an intersessional meeting, for up to two days in 2022. Working closely with the Coordination Committee, States Parties and civil society, we will organise an intersessional meeting that gives States Parties an opportunity to share progress on our Convention obligations, as well as on the implementation of the new Lausanne Action Plan ahead of the next MSP. We aim to hold this back-to-back with the intersessional meeting of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, to minimise travel and associated costs. Through this pilot initiative, together we can assess the utility and practicality of maintaining these meetings in future years.

We have also been entrusted with a mandate to develop a selection procedure for the recruitment of future ISU Directors, to be considered at the 10th MSP, and implemented thereafter. The UK Presidency will work closely with the GICHD, the host organisation for the ISU, to develop a robust recruitment process for this crucial position. Let me take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of our current Director, Sheila Mweemba, who has graciously agreed to several extensions of her contract. I am delighted that she will be staying with us in this role until 30 April 2023, until the next Director is recruited.

Working with the relevant coordinators, we will engage with States that have obligations under Articles 3 and 4, as well those States that may submit extension requests to be considered at the 10th MSP; and with States Parties that have not submitted Article 7 transparency reports for two consecutive years, to understand obstacles they face, and to find solutions to ensure we are all fulfilling our Convention obligations in a timely manner.

Mr President,

The United Kingdom is excited about the opportunities this Presidency presents to progress the objectives of this crucial Convention. We will begin with tabling the

CCM resolution in time for UNGA First Committee. We very much look forward to working with you all collaboratively over the course of the year.

Thank you.

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