

Convention on Cluster Munitions

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Agenda item 10(g)

**Review of the status and operation of the Convention and other matters
important for achieving the aims of the Convention****Transparency measures**

Building synergies and improving transparency reporting outcomes across conventional arms control instruments

Submitted by Australia*, **

I. Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to explore synergies in transparency reporting across conventional arms control instruments and identify possible next steps in improving reporting outcomes. In particular, the paper identifies possible areas of focus for the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and future CCM Transparency Measures Coordinators in furthering these objectives.
2. This paper builds on existing literature on transparency reporting and consultations with States Parties to the CCM and other conventional arms control instruments, relevant international organisations, treaty ISUs, and Secretariats. As part of Australia's role as CCM Transparency Measures Coordinator in 2025, Australia convened an informal meeting on transparency reporting in March 2025 and held informal discussions in the margins of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Intersessional Meeting in June 2025.
3. Australia encourages States Parties to the CCM and the CCM ISU, in particular, to consider the ideas outlined in this paper, share lessons learned and progress practical steps to improve transparency reporting.

II. The purpose and benefits of transparency reporting

4. Transparency reporting by States on the implementation of their obligations promotes trust and confidence building between States Parties. It is an important tool to monitor progress in implementing the CCM, and facilitates international cooperation and assistance between States Parties. Reporting can help understand assistance needs and foster a collaborative environment for achieving common goals.
5. The benefits of transparency reporting further include, but are not limited to:
 - Ensuring parties have a clear view of developments relating to the CCM and its implementation;

* The present document was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent information.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

- Enabling informed decision-making on the implementation of the CCM;
- Demonstrating the impact of the CCM and progress in implementation; and
- Identifying and addressing challenges or obstacles that may hinder implementation.

III. Transparency reporting under the CCM and the Lausanne Action Plan

6. Under Article 7 of the CCM, States Parties must report on progress in implementing their obligations under the Convention, including: national implementation measures; total cluster munition stockpiles held, and progress made for their destruction; clearance of contaminated areas; risk reduction education; victim assistance and international cooperation and assistance.

7. States retaining, acquiring or transferring cluster munitions under Article 3 must also report on planned and actual use of these munitions.

8. Article 7 of the CCM requires States Parties to provide an initial transparency report no later than 180 days after entry into force. States Parties are required to report on an annual basis by 30 April each year thereafter.

9. States Parties to the CCM committed to particular actions on transparency measures under Actions 43 to 46 of the Lausanne Action Plan. The action items for States included:

- Providing initial and annual transparency reports within the deadlines set by Article 7 of the CCM;
- Developing adapted reporting forms, taking into account the actions in the Action Plan; and
- Seeking assistance with reporting if needed, and responding to such requests where in a position to do so.

10. Consistent with the Lausanne Action Plan, States Parties adopted a new reporting template at the 11th Meeting of States Parties in September 2023 (CM/MSP/2023/7). The template introduced a new Form J on Gender and Diversity of Populations, which provides an opportunity for more detailed reporting, including through the collection of gender-specific data.

IV. Transparency reporting trends

11. Despite the benefits of transparency reporting, the submission rate of Article 7 transparency reports has declined over time. In 2024, the submission rate was 56 percent. There remained seven States Parties with outstanding initial transparency reports as of 2024.

12. The CCM Implementation Support Unit has advised that as of 30 June 2025:

- 63 of the expected 105 annual reports covering calendar year 2024 have been submitted;
- 2 States Parties have submitted their outstanding Article 7 initial reports, following advocacy by Australia as CCM Transparency Measures Coordinator;
- 5 States Parties have outstanding Article 7 initial reports; and
- 46 States Parties have used the revised Article 7 reporting form.

13. In terms of annual reports, this represents a response rate of 60%, as of June 2025. While this rate is higher than reporting rates under other instruments, which sit at around 50%, there remains scope for improvement.

V. Challenges in transparency reporting

14. Common challenges in transparency reporting across the CCM and other conventional arms control instruments can be broadly grouped as follows:

- lack of awareness of reporting obligations and processes;
- Lack of capacity and resources;
- Lack of interagency cooperation and coordination; and
- Lack of political support and national security considerations.

15. Some States Parties will face some challenges more than others. Some challenges are context-specific, and differ from region to region. Just as there is no one challenge faced by States in fulfilling their reporting obligations, there is likewise no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges faced by States Parties in their reporting. That said, where States in a particular region share common challenges, there may be opportunities to explore regional responses to address them.

VI. Practical measures to improve transparency reporting

16. Based on Australia's consultations, stakeholders identified the following practical measures that could be adopted by treaty ISUs and Secretariats, where appropriate and applicable, to improve reporting outcomes:

- Streamlining reporting templates;
- Creating a calendar or matrix of due dates and obligations across conventional arms control instruments;
- Considering the relative benefits of aligning or staggering reporting deadlines across conventional arms control instruments;
- Distributing regular reminders and resources on reporting requirements and due dates;
- Creating clear procedures for updating initial and/or annual reports and for communicating those updated reports;
- Providing training on how to complete, submit and update reports;
- Holding meetings on transparency reporting (including joint meetings with other treaty ISUs and secretariats) prior to reporting deadlines to assist states parties with preparations;
- Updating reporting resources regularly and making them available to states parties;
- Undertaking initiatives to help states better understand the benefits of transparency reporting;
- Where possible and appropriate, preparing guidance documents and reporting tools in national languages to make them accessible to states parties; and
- Using capacity building workshops to highlight how one process for collecting information and compiling a report can help with another.

17. A number of these suggestions would also enhance synergies in reporting across conventional arms control frameworks.

VII. Synergies in transparency reporting across conventional arms control

18. Strengthening synergies between conventional arms control instruments – such as the CCM, APMBC, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) – could further enhance efforts to quantitatively and qualitatively improve transparency reporting.

19. For example, States have observed that one of the difficulties in using the same information for different Conventions, where it would otherwise be possible, is the different reporting periods in place. The reporting deadlines of the various arms control instruments are:

- CCM and APMBC have the same deadline of 30 April;

- CCW reporting deadline is 31 March;
- ATT reporting deadline is 31 May; and
- UNROCA reporting deadline is 31 May.

20. Possible synergies across conventional arms control instruments that could be further explored include:

- Synergies in data collection;
- Synergies in awareness-raising activities on transparency reporting;
- Promoting common approaches to reporting under conventional arms control instruments at the national level;
- Providing international cooperation and assistance to states to assist reporting under multiple instruments; and
- Encouraging dialogue between relevant treaty is us and secretariats.

VIII. Complementarities between the CCM and APMBC

21. There are also particular complementarities between the CCM and APMBC. Of the CCM's 111 States Parties, 108 were also States Parties to the APMBC as of 30 June 2025. Many States affected by cluster munitions are also affected by anti-personnel mines, and where this is the case, the same authority is often responsible for dealing with both types of contamination. In the context of the CCM and APMBC, there can also be synergies in reporting on some obligations, such as land release, victim assistance, cooperation and assistance, and risk reduction education.

IX. Possible areas of action for future Transparency Measures Coordinators

22. Based on the review of existing literature, consultations and our work in this field, Australia has identified the following four possible areas of focus for future CCM Transparency Measures Coordinators to improve transparency reporting under the CCM and build synergies across the relevant frameworks:

(a) Develop a reporting guide on initial and annual reporting under the CCM: To build national reporting capabilities, further develop the draft reporting guide initiated by Belgium in 2012. Since reporting has evolved since the 3rd MSP, it would be beneficial to update guidance on reporting under the CCM. In particular, the reporting guide could identify commonalities between the CCM and APMBC to assist officials in completing their reports;

(b) Develop a common annual reporting calendar or matrix: It can be difficult for States Parties to understand, track and fulfil their reporting obligations under conventional arms control instruments. Putting these in one place, alongside the relevant due dates, can facilitate the process and help identify synergies in reporting;

(c) Progress recommendations on practical measures for treaty ISUs and Secretariats on strengthening transparency reporting and building synergies: Australia has identified in this working paper a number of practical measures that could be progressed to improve transparency reporting outcomes and build synergies across conventional arms control instruments;

(d) Convene biannual informal meetings to explore synergies in transparency reporting across conventional arms control instruments: Australia held the first informal meeting on transparency reporting in March 2025. It included participation by the treaty ISUs and Secretariats of the CCM, APMBC, CCW, ATT and UNROCA, together with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC) and States Parties to the CCM interested in transparency reporting. The meeting was a valuable

opportunity to share ideas and experiences on reporting challenges and good practices, and helped identify synergies in reporting. The continuation of such meetings could pave the way for further improvements in reporting processes and collaboration between treaty ISUs and Secretariats.

X. Conclusion

23. Australia supports transparent and timely reporting under the CCM and in accordance with the Lausanne Action Plan. We strongly encourage States Parties to submit their Article 7 transparency reports. These reports serve as a vital indicator of the Convention's overall health and provide a benchmark for measuring the collective and individual progress of States Parties in achieving their goals.

24. Australia has sought in this paper to bring together information, ideas and experience from across conventional arms control frameworks to identify ways to improve reporting outcomes. Australia sees value in continuing work to identify and build synergies in transparency reporting across conventional arms control instruments.

25. Australia would like to thank, in particular, the treaty ISUs and Secretariats of the CCM, APMBC, CCW, ATT and UNROCA, together with UNIDIR, UNODA, ICRC, ICBL-CMC and relevant States Parties to the CCM and APMBC, for their valuable insights in preparing this working paper.
