



**EU Statement**  
**Intersessional Meeting**  
**of the Convention on Cluster Munitions**  
**Geneva, 16-17 May 2022**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

Let me start by congratulating you on assuming your role as the President of the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We pledge our support and look forward to working with you on advancing this Convention.

The EU is grateful to Switzerland for its presidency of the Second Review Conference of the CCM, where States Parties agreed strong forward-looking actions, which will contribute significantly to the realisation of the objectives set out in the Convention over the next five years.

Mr. President,

The EU supports the humanitarian goal of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We are deeply concerned by the impact on civilian populations of the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions, including the extensive use of cluster munitions in Ukraine, Syria, Yemen, Libya and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The EU calls upon all actors to refrain from such use and to fully comply with International Humanitarian Law.

The Convention has brought about many significant achievements since its entry into force more than a decade ago, in particular the enhanced protection of women, girls, boys and men from the threats and effects of cluster munitions and their remnants. However, the number of new victims of cluster munitions each year is worrying. While the development of communities in affected areas is hindered by the presence of cluster munitions remnants the active participation of cluster munition victims in their communities and in the work of the Convention is a source of inspiration to continue working on this front.

Last year at the Second Review Conference, the States Parties to the Convention successfully adopted by consensus the Lausanne Action Plan, which has introduced a set of robust actions and indicators to measure the progress of the Convention's implementation. States Parties have committed to make every effort to complete their time-bound obligations by the Third Review Conference, in particular to increase the pace of both stockpile destruction and clearance, with

a view to completing their obligations as soon as possible and in any event, no later than their respective deadlines set by the Convention. The full and timely implementation of the Convention by States Parties substantially contributes to end the suffering of civilians affected by cluster munitions. We also welcome the commitment to gender mainstreaming across the Convention. We strongly encourage the setting up of country coalitions to support States Parties in this regard.

We applaud the global efforts that, in the past decade, led to major cluster munition clearance and submunitions destruction. In total, ten States Parties and one State not party have been declared free of cluster munition-contaminated area in the last 10 years.

The EU contributes towards the goals of the Convention through its commitment to mine action, which also addresses explosive remnants of war (ERW) including cluster munitions remnants. As the world's leading humanitarian donor, the EU and its Member States continue to provide significant funding to mine action especially in the fields of risk education, clearance, stockpile destruction, and victim assistance. A number of EU funded projects contribute to socio-economic reintegration of victims impacted by mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, and to enhancing local and regional capacities. For example, between 2019 and 2021, the EU allocated 145 million Euro to support mine action, including cluster munitions remnants. Another 90 million Euro has been allocated for 2022 and 2023. The EU also highlights the importance of environmental consideration as becoming increasingly prominent in mine action as it is across all sectors.

We equally stress the importance of victim assistance and the full, equal and effective participation of cluster munition victims in society. Where needed, we must support States Parties in the integration of victim assistance into their national policies and legal frameworks in a non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive manner. Where possible, we support seeking synergies in the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and other relevant disarmament instruments, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, especially on victim assistance, clearance, and survey. Such coordination contributes to the development of common efficient and effective policy approaches, and guiding principles.

Mr. President,

We convene here today amid Russia's unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which threw the world into even more uncertain times. Nations from every corner of the world have united at the UN General Assembly in calling for peace, demanding that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw from the territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognised borders, demanding civilian protection and humanitarian access in Ukraine. Furthermore, it also deplores the enabling involvement of Belarus in this unlawful use of force. These resolutions sent a powerful message to Russia and Belarus that they are isolated in their actions. We call on Russia and Belarus to abide by these resolutions and their international obligations. Russia bears full responsibility for the loss of life, the human suffering and all the destruction it causes in Ukraine. The EU fully acknowledges Ukraine's right to self-defence and the Ukrainian armed forces' efforts to defend

Ukraine's territorial integrity and population in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter. We commend the Ukrainian people's strength, courage and resistance to withstand Russia's aggression and stands with them in firm solidarity.

Credible reports indicate that cluster munitions have been used in Ukraine. In particular, their reported indiscriminate use by Russian forces has damaged hospitals, ambulances, civilian property and infrastructure, causing civilian casualties and serious psychological trauma. Their explosive remnants pose a long-lasting threat to civilians and hinder humanitarian access. We call on all actors to refrain from using cluster munitions in violation of IHL.

This war of aggression is not only a humanitarian catastrophe for Ukraine and its people; it is also a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, international humanitarian law and human rights law. The EU actively supports the work of the International Criminal Court and measures to ensure accountability for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. There can be no impunity for war crimes.

In conclusion, we express our appreciation for partners from across the sector including United Nations entities, the ICRC, mine action operators and civil society who are in the front line in ensuring effective implementation of the Convention, through their efforts in clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education, victim assistance and advocacy.

I thank you Mr. President.