

Reaffirming the determination to put an end to the suffering caused by cluster munitions

Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

20-21 September 2021

Statement by the Gender and Diversity Working Group

Thank you Mr President.

I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of the Gender and Diversity Working Group, which includes representatives from Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines, Danish Church Aid, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, The HALO Trust, Humanity and Inclusion, International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC), Mines Action Canada, Mines Advisory Group, Mine Action Review, Norwegian People's Aid, and SEHLAC (Seguridad Humana en América Latina y el Caribe).

The Working Group welcomes the mainstreaming of gender, age, disability and other diversity considerations across the Lausanne Action Plan and Political Declaration. This is an acknowledgement that as we work to rid the world of the scourge of cluster munitions, our efforts should equally benefit everyone, particularly historically marginalized populations. The quality of the process is as important as the result.

The experience of our member organizations indicates that gender and diversity are key considerations in effective and efficient land release, risk education and victim assistance. This is why it is crucial that the Action Plan mainstreams gender and diversity across all relevant sections.

The inclusion of a dedicated action on gender and diversity in the Action Plan underscores the importance of these considerations for the effective implementation of the treaty. At the same time, it is essential that we do not treat this as an add-on, but as a better and more effective way of working. We encourage States Parties to systematically include these considerations in their Article 4 extension requests and Article 7 transparency reports.

To ensure words turn into action, we need monitoring and accountability. In that respect, the Gender and Diversity Working Group welcomes the changes to the treaty machinery which create the role of gender focal points in the Coordinating Committee. This will undoubtedly be an important role and the Gender and Diversity Working Group stands ready to provide support.

Mainstreaming gender and diversity will not only improve the effectiveness of cluster munition clearance operations, but it will also contribute to increased State Parties' compliance with a range of other international frameworks with gender and diversity commitments, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. We commend the working paper introduced by the Netherlands, which shows how synergies in implementation, monitoring and reporting of various instruments will maximize efforts and promote cross-sector advancement.

Mr. President,

We commend you and your team for your efforts to ensure strong gender and diversity commitments at this Review Conference. We appreciate that while the importance of gender equality is becoming increasingly accepted, finding consensus on diversity has been more challenging.

We appreciate that the recent change from “women, girls, boys and men and diverse groups” to “women, girls, boys and men from diverse backgrounds” is an attempt to find consensus. However, language about background misses out on some aspects of identity. We are sure that exclusion was not intentional so we suggest either returning the language to the original formulation or using the phrase “diversity of populations” instead.]

We would like to emphasise that we need to include ***all*** groups in the implementation of the Convention, not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because inclusion leads to better results. We urge all States Parties to make every effort to implement their obligations in a more inclusive way, and we will be monitoring such progress.

Thank you.

ENDS.