



S L O V A K I A

**Statement
by**

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**at the 2nd Review Conference
of the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

agenda item 7.
*Reaffirming the determination to put an end to the suffering
caused by cluster munitions*

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- *check against delivery* -

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your presidency of the second Review Conference. We commend you and your team for unwavering and continued efforts to achieve a positive and forward-looking outcome of the Conference in these difficult circumstances of the COVID19 pandemic. You can count on full support of my delegation.

Slovakia alligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU.

Mr. President,

Slovakia considers the Convention on Cluster Munitions to be a key disarmament instrument. We fully subscribe to its humanitarian goal to put an end to suffering and unacceptable harm caused to civilians by cluster munitions.

This Review Conference provides us with the opportunity to review the operation and functioning of the Convention and to set ambitious goals for the next review cycle.

The Review Document of the Dubrovnik Action Plan should give us a sincere account, what has been achieved since the last Review Conference and where we can improve our endeavours. The Lausanne Action Plan should be a robust plan with measurable indicators to guide our efforts to achieve progress in implementing the Convention. The Lausanne Declaration should clearly demonstrate our commitment in realising the objectives of the CCM.

It will be necessary to transform these ambitions into deeds. Slovakia is fully committed to meet all its obligations under the CCM.

Slovakia's fundamental obligation is to destroy stockpiles of its cluster munitions by the 1st January 2024. We have informed the Conference in November and in the latest transparency report on the progress achieved so far. We are confident that even ahead of the stipulated deadline we can destroy those types of cluster munitions, which have been so far continuously destroyed through our national capacities. We are also undertaking all necessary steps to destroy the remaining type, M-26, through international cooperation. In March this year we signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the United States, which, inter alia, provides additional financial support for M-26 stockpiles disposal. Consequently, we have agreed with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency to manage the M-26 disposal. The parameters of this project will guarantee the M-26 destruction on time and in conformity with the CCM.

I would also like to reiterate the previous declaration my country made at the first Review Conference that Slovakia will not retain any cluster munitions according to the Article 3.6.

Slovakia is gravely concerned by the civilian casualties resulting from the continued use of cluster munitions in contemporary armed conflicts. It is necessary to redouble efforts towards universalization of the Convention and of its norms. We call on all States that have not yet done so, to join the Convention without delay. To help promoting the universalisation, Slovakia contributed to the Sponsorship Programme in 2019.

Every year, a large number of civilians are killed or injured by explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions, which have negative impact on economic and social development and post-conflict reconstruction. Risk education programmes are necessary to avoid new casualties and injuries. Victim assistance needs to be integrated into the national policies to help and empower victims. Clearance of contaminated areas should be a matter of urgency. International cooperation plays an important role in assisting State Parties in fully implementing the CCM.

For decades, Slovakia has been actively engaged in international cooperation with particular focus on demining activities, such as mine-clearance, capacity building or financial contributions. We have been contributing to demining particularly through Slovak troops in UN peace operations, through international organisations' projects as well as on a bilateral basis. We have also become mine action donor through our support to UNMAS project in Iraq in 2019 and 2020. Slovakia is committed to explore further ways to contribute to mine action in the future.

Transparency enables States Parties to monitor the implementation of their obligations. Slovakia will continue to submit its annual transparency reports, including on stockpile destruction.

Mr. President,

To conclude, let me reiterate that Slovakia stands ready to cooperate with all stakeholders to promote humanitarian objectives of the Convention and achieve successful outcome of this Review Conference.

Thank you for your attention.