



BELGIUM

**10 MSP - Convention on Cluster Munitions
September 2022**

General statement

Mr. President,

As it is the first time my delegation takes the floor, allow me to **congratulate** you for your accession to the Chairmanship of the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Rest assured of Belgium's full support.

Belgium would also take this opportunity to **congratulate, once again, Switzerland** for its presidency of the Second Review Conference of our Convention and the **adoption**, by States Parties of **the Lausanne Action Plan**, providing a robust guidance towards the complete fulfillment of our commitments.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. President,

The use of cluster munitions causes **indiscriminate and unnecessary suffering**, maiming in particular civilian populations. Belgium is deeply concerned of its extensive use in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Nagorno-Karabagh and **more recently Ukraine**.

We condemn Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, constituting an unjustifiable, unprovoked and illegal war, threatening the regional peace and the security of millions of citizens. My delegation urge Russia to immediately cease its aggression and to completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Meanwhile, we **call on all actors**, in all conflicts, **to refrain from using cluster munitions**, which use is irreconcilable with the principles of International Humanitarian Law.

Mr. President,

The Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force more than ten years ago. Year after year, the family of States Parties has grown, showing the relevance of

its purposes. Nevertheless, the **pace of its universalization seems to slow down** those last two years.

However, as already mentioned, we are **facing numerous situations illustrating the need for a complete prohibition of cluster munitions**. We therefore **welcome any effort** made in order continue growing the number of States Parties and **salute your actions**, Mr. President, on this topic, and in particular the **regional workshop** organized this March in Abuja. We also salute the participation of **South Sudan and Zimbabwe** in this workshop, and encourage them to join the Convention.

The continuous use of cluster munitions, and new extensive use of it in Ukraine, will inevitably lead us to an increase in the numbers of casualties in the upcoming years. It is therefore **crucial to keep maintaining a high level of commitment**, including adequate **funding for the removal of explosive ordnance**. In this regard, Belgium is pleased to mention it gave this year another two million EUR funding for clearance efforts of UNMAS in Iraq and Syria.

My delegation wishes to recall that the **provision of adequate and inclusive victim assistance is an obligation to all States Parties** of our Convention. It is equally essential to **allow survivors to exercise their rights** and to participate in a full and equal manner in society. No victims should be left behind.

When it comes to assisting victims, we also wish to stress the **importance to ensure synergy and linkages**, where possible, with other relevant Conventions, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Finally, Mr. President, Belgium is concerned about the **financial situation of our Convention**. The **payment of annual contributions in full and on time is a key obligation** of the Treaty that bears witness to our collective political commitment to the CCM. We urge all States Parties to pay their contributions in full and on time, in order for us all to demonstrate that political commitment is paired up with concrete actions.

I thank you Mr. President.