



**Statement by the Delegation of the Holy See at the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties  
to the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
Terms of Reference of the “gender focal points” Geneva, 1 September 2022**

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Delegation of the Holy See wishes to thank France and Namibia which, in their capacity as Coordinators on General Status and Operation of the Convention, have found themselves with the task of coordinating the proposed Terms of Reference. We wish to thank France and Namibia for their constructive approach and for their careful listening to the various inputs provided by States Parties.

The Holy See believes that it is of the utmost importance to take into account the impact of cluster munitions on girls, boys, women and men so as to provide concrete responses and assistance to their respective needs. This, indeed, is already stressed in Article 5 of the Convention, on victims assistance.

Mr. President,

While sharing in principle the overall intended objectives, the Holy See is not in a position to align itself with the proposed Terms of Reference. We believe that the proposed draft should have been the outcome of a collective and thorough negotiation among all States Parties to the Convention.

In this regard, the Holy See wishes to reiterate its views provided earlier during the general debate and its concern over the introduction of certain expressions which are ambiguous and not clearly defined.

For these reasons, also recalling its interpretative declaration upon the adoption of the Lausanne Action Plan during the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions<sup>1</sup>, the Holy See wishes to place on record that it retains the right to dissociate itself from the work of the so-called “gender focal points” should their work extend beyond the ordinary, generally accepted usage and meaning of the word “gender”, based on the biological identity that is male and female. The Holy See does not accept any other interpretation, adaptation, or connotation, different from this accepted prior usage<sup>2</sup>.

For the sake of transparency, we ask that our position be duly reflected in the final report of the meeting.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Doc. CCM/CONF/2021/MISC.1, Interpretative statement of the delegation of the Holy See to the second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Holy See's Final Statement at the 4th World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995.