



EU Statement
Eleventh Meeting of States Parties
to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 11 – 14 September 2023

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. *[Aligning clause]*

Let me start by congratulating you, Ambassador Abdul-Karim HASHIM MOSTAFA, Permanent Representative of Iraq, on assuming the role as the President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). We look forward to your stewardship and assure you of our full support and cooperation in advancing this Convention. We also congratulate Ms. Pamela Moraga on her appointment as the new CCM ISU Director. We wish her all the best in her new assignment.

Mr. President,

First of all, we welcome Nigeria and South Sudan as new States Parties to this Convention and look forward to working with them.

As we commemorate the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the CCM this year, we recognize and support the humanitarian goals of this treaty. We appreciate that there have been positive developments in the implementation of the Convention by States Parties. The Convention substantially contributes to end the suffering of civilians affected by cluster munitions and to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the core objectives of human security, promoting peace and international security.

The occasion of Central America becoming the world's first cluster munition-free sub-region is a testament to the region's unwavering commitment to peace and security and dedication to the implementation of this Convention.

We applaud the global efforts that led to the destruction of 99% of the States Parties' cluster munitions stockpiles. We congratulate Bulgaria and Slovakia for having completed their Article 3 obligations this year and observe Peru's determination to do the same next year. At the same time, the EU encourages other States Parties to do the utmost to meet their commitments, ensuring timely completion of their stockpiles destruction, thus further advancing the humanitarian objectives of the Convention.

The EU recognizes that since the Convention's adoption, over 700 square kilometers of land has been declared cluster munition-free and released for productive use. This tangible socio-economic benefit underscores the Convention's contribution to the well-being of local communities. In this regard, we congratulate Bosnia and Herzegovina for successfully fulfilling its obligations by completing the clearance of cluster munitions.

The EU also emphasizes that putting the human rights of victims at the forefront of victim assistance is not just a commitment, but a shared responsibility. 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 CCM 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.

The EU fully supports the Country Coalition Concept, which has proven to be a useful vehicle to enhance cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders and to tailor assistance to the specific needs and challenges faced by an affected State. We also welcome the commitment to gender mainstreaming across the Convention as decided by States Parties at the Second Review Conference. An inclusive gender-balanced approach in implementation activities at the national level and in the Convention's machinery, including its meetings, remains crucial.

Mr. President,

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

We reiterate our strong condemnation of Russia's ongoing unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine in blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter. Credible reports show that cluster munitions have been used in Ukraine, particularly by Russian forces. We call on Russia to immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces and proxies from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The EU will continue to provide strong financial, economic, humanitarian, military, legal and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes.

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.

We are concerned about the dire financial situation of the Convention. The payment of annual contributions in full and on time is part of the commitment of each State Party to the objectives of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

I thank you, Mr. President