



**Convention on Cluster Munitions
11th Meeting of States Parties**

New Zealand General Statement

11 September 2023

Thank you, President.

Please allow me to express my sincere thanks to you, and your team, for your commitment to guiding the Convention over the past year. I assure you of Aotearoa New Zealand's full support.

I also take the opportunity to convey my delegation's deep appreciation to the Implementation Support Unit. Your annual report makes clear the huge amount of work you deliver in support of this Convention.

President, as we meet the norm against cluster munitions, is under sustained pressure. It is imperative that we use this week to condemn these weapons unequivocally, and recommit to upholding all of our obligations, including with respect to actions by countries not party to this Convention.

Reporting from the Cluster Munition Monitor continues to make clear the devastating humanitarian consequences and unacceptable harm to civilians these weapons cause. The 2023 Monitor reports the highest number of people killed and injured by cluster munitions since it began reporting over a decade ago. Moreover, The Monitor documents the disturbing development of casualties recorded from cluster munition attacks, in addition to casualties from their unexploded remnants. A staggering 95% of casualties recorded last

year from cluster munitions were civilians. And, for casualties from the deadly legacy of cluster munitions remnants where the age group was reported, children accounted for 71%.

The vast majority of casualties recorded were in Ukraine. Russia's extensive use of cluster munitions in its war of aggression against Ukraine, including targeting civilian infrastructure, is well documented. In July, the United States announced its decision to transfer cluster munitions to Ukraine, and use by Ukraine was subsequently reported. New Zealand's Prime Minister, and our Minister of Foreign Affairs, have made clear New Zealand's views, and I repeat them here. These weapons are indiscriminate by their very nature. We are opposed to any developments that increase the likelihood of cluster munitions being used in any conflict. And we have an obligation, under article 21 of the Convention, to pursue universal adherence to the Convention, and to promote its norms.

We take heart from the responses of other States Parties, including yours, Mr President.

We also read with concern the Monitor's reporting of new use in Myanmar and Syria, and reports that Myanmar has produced these weapons.

Aotearoa New Zealand condemns any and all use of cluster munitions. We call for all transfers and production of these weapons to cease. And we call on all countries to join the Convention. We also remind parties to armed conflict about their obligations under international humanitarian law.

President, I thank the Cluster Munition Coalition for producing this year's Cluster Munitions Monitor. New Zealand is proud, yet again, to be a financial supporter of this important resource, as well as a long-standing contributor to

mine action and clearance efforts around the world. And I extend heartfelt appreciation to civil society for their tireless work, including monitoring, advocacy, clearance, risk education, and victim assistance.

President, we must not forget the advances made under this Convention. Since the Convention's adoption, States Parties have collectively destroyed 99% of their declared stockpiles. No State Party has used these weapons. Use is stigmatised, even if, as we have seen, it still occurs. We welcome South Sudan and Nigeria as the Convention's newest States Parties.

We look forward to engaging with all States Parties this week and to hearing updates on Parties' respective destruction and clearance deadline obligations. We are committed to working with other States Parties to protect and reinforce this Convention, in pursuit of our shared goal of ridding the world of cluster munitions and putting an end, once and for all, to the suffering they cause.

I thank you.