

Convention on Cluster Munitions Twelfth Meeting of States Parties
10-13 September 2024 - GENEVA
General Statement from Canada

Thank you Madam President,

On behalf of the Canadian delegation, I would like to express our appreciation to you for the manner in which you have prepared the work of this 12th Meeting of States Parties and for your efforts in support of this Convention over the past year.

We would also like to express our sincere condolences on the untimely loss of Ambassador Diaz of Peru.

Madam President,

I would start off by saying that like many in the room, Canada is bound by our obligations to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This includes speaking out publicly against the use of cluster munitions. Canada is proud to have been one of the countries that led on the banning of cluster munitions around the world and we continue to believe that they should not be used. We are committed to ending the suffering and long-lasting impacts caused by these indiscriminate weapons, particularly on civilians. We welcome advances made towards the norms of the Convention, particularly noting the achievements in stockpile destructions from member states.

We would stress that states not party to the Convention are legally obligated to respect the principles enshrined in IHL during armed conflict, and this applies to any weapon, including cluster munitions. We discourage all States not party to this Convention from engaging in the transfer, stockpiling, and use of cluster munitions.

Madam President,

Our treaty becomes stronger only through its universalization. Indeed, only through the full universalization of the treaty can we hope to see an end to the use of cluster munitions and to the suffering it causes to civilians. This is why Canada, like other delegations that have spoken to this, regrets Lithuania's decision to leave the Convention, the first such withdrawal by any State Party from a humanitarian disarmament convention. For a treaty which has not seen a significant number of new states joining in recent years, the withdrawal of a State Party is alarming and moves us further away from our common goal of full universalization, while also challenging the important norm this Convention has created. We thus call upon Lithuania to reconsider its decision and also call upon any State Party which is considering leaving the Convention to reflect on the serious impacts on civilians caused by these weapons.

Canada calls upon any state who wishes to join this Convention, to do so at its earliest opportunity and reaffirms that Canada stands ready to provide its support to new and prospective States Parties.

Madam President,

Canada holds transparency as a crucial element in banning cluster munitions, and we remain concerned by the trend of non-compliance on our collective obligation to submit annual reports. We call on all parties to submit their annual reports on time. Canada also regrets the ongoing financial issues that

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jeopardize not only the CCM's long-term sustainability, but that of other humanitarian disarmament instruments as well.

To avoid similar issues in the future, we once again call upon all states to fulfill their financial obligations to the CCM in full and on time. We also do not wish to see the compromising of the use of all official UN languages in our meetings as a result of trying to "balance the books" indeed, our convention is one that underlines the importance of the principle of multilingualism.

Madam President,

Gender mainstreaming within the Convention is vital from our perspective and we welcome the outstanding work done in this area along with the large number of actions related to gender-mainstreaming within the Lausanne Action Plan. We are pleased to join the joint statement on gender in this regard.

Finally, Canada strongly supports and encourages the participation of a large number of NGOs and members of International Organizations, whose invaluable contributions offer all of us important measures to advance this Convention in an inclusive manner. Together, we can further reinforce the norm against cluster munitions, and help create a world free of these indiscriminate and inhumane weapons.

Thank you.