



Implementation Support Unit of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2C | PO Box 1300
1211 Geneva 1 | Switzerland
T +41 22 730 9761 / 9333 / 9314
info@cmconvention.org | www.clusterconvention.org

Convention on Cluster Munitions Stakeholder Dialogue Identifies Key Challenges Ahead of 10-13 September Meeting of States Parties

Geneva, 5 September 2024 – In advance of next week’s Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the CCM Implementation Support Unit convened a group of stakeholders to discuss emerging challenges to the norm prohibiting the weapon, and implications for wider humanitarian disarmament, peace and development goals. Drawing on the experience and expertise of States Parties involved in the coordination of the work under the convention, the dialogue also saw the engagement of intergovernmental organizations, civil society, and individuals involved in the 2008 convention negotiation process – including States impacted by the weapon – representing the wide gamut of treaty stakeholders.

Use of cluster munitions in ongoing conflicts in Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, combined with increased casualties, demands a strategic assessment of the Convention’s implementation as States and disarmament partners prepare for the 2026 Third Review Conference, and related action plan. Further to this, participants voiced serious concern that – although exercising its national sovereignty within permissive provisions of the Convention – the seemingly unchallenged move by Lithuania to action a withdrawal from the CCM, five consecutive weapons transfers between States not party (with allegations of transit through the territory of States Parties to the CCM), and a potential “normalization” of the provision and possible use of the weapon, are indicative of an overall weakening of international humanitarian law (IHL), also referenced in the [UN Secretary General’s Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict](#).

It was highlighted that the arguments opposing any military legitimacy of the weapon, agreed at the time of Conventions’ adoption, remain valid today. Military utility arguments cannot be seen in isolation of their incontrovertible humanitarian harm. These rules are not just important for peacetime, but even more so in times of war. A stronger reaction among States parties to the CCM was emphasized, recalling States’ obligations under Article 21, to *encourage States not party to this Convention to ratify, accept, approve or accede to this Convention, with the goal of attracting the adherence of all States to this Convention...* and to *discourage States not party to this Convention from using cluster munitions*.

While the challenging security environment faced by many States today was raised as a possible driver having “reopened” an unfortunate debate on humanitarian disarmament commitments, a long-standing CCM proponent instrumental in the 2008 treaty negotiations noted that “Cluster Munitions do not win wars but rather terrorize civilians.” Participants also clearly stated that the norms established by IHL and enshrined in the CCM function precisely as a guardrail for the morality of conflicts noting the negative impact on peace building and prospects for lasting peace when civilian communities bear trauma of indiscriminate weapons use, as well as the long-term development impact of cluster munitions remnants on lives and livelihoods, well after conflicts have ended.

Taking a human-centered approach to security, breaking down humanitarian advocacy silos, emphasizing the Convention as a tool for advancing cross cutting peace, security and development goals, and broadening advocacy efforts with states not party and other humanitarian disarmament regimes, were highlighted by participants as key areas for discussion relevant to the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties, and in preparation for the 2026 CCM Review Conference.

In closing, the CCM 12MSP Presidency emphasized the need for a comprehensive assessment of today's challenges to the Cluster Munition Convention prohibition on use of the weapon, recognizing the need to break out of "echo-chamber" dynamics through reinvigorated actions and ideas, and called on stakeholders to actively engage in wide alliances. Strengthening implementation support mechanisms, including identifying synergies with other disarmament regimes was mentioned as critical to effective Convention Implementation, elimination of the weapon, and protection of civilians.

Representatives from 112 States Parties and 12 treaty Signatories, observers, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and civil society will participate in the Convention on Cluster Munitions Twelfth Meeting of States Parties taking place at UN Geneva 10-13 September.

Ends

- [CCM 12MSP Website](https://www.clusterconvention.org/12msp-int/) - <https://www.clusterconvention.org/12msp-int/>
- [CCM Lausanne Action Plan](https://bit.ly/LAPenglish) - <https://bit.ly/LAPenglish>