

## **Convention on Cluster Munitions**

### **12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties**

#### **Ireland General Statement**

President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Méndez Escobar, on assuming the Presidency of the Twelfth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I assure you of our delegation's full support.

Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and delivers the following remarks in a national capacity.

President,

We gather at a moment of deep concern with regard to this lifesaving disarmament instrument. We continue to witness widespread use and casualties from this indiscriminate weapon.

Over the 16 years since the Convention's adoption in Dublin in 2008, Ireland has maintained a strong and unwavering commitment to the CCM. The Treaty has established itself as a critical mechanism for the protection of civilians in conflict, and an important component of the international disarmament framework. The Convention has successfully enabled progress on land

clearance, victim support and survivor engagement, and risk education and awareness. The Convention marked a major accomplishment last year: the destruction of 100% of States Parties' cluster munition stockpiles, following Peru's successful destruction of its stockpiles. This means that States Parties have destroyed some 1.49 million cluster munitions and 179 million submunitions over the lifetime of the Convention, according to the CCM Monitor. These are commendable, life-saving accomplishments worth celebrating and learning from.

Nevertheless, we are faced with the challenging task of reversing the negative trends facing the CCM. Ireland is deeply concerned by the documented use of cluster munitions in 2024 in Myanmar, Syria, and Ukraine, as well as new recorded casualties of cluster munitions in 2023 in Azerbaijan, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Mauritania, Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, where civilians accounted for 93% of all casualties and children accounted for nearly half.

President,

Ireland maintains, in line with our Convention obligations, that cluster munitions are by nature indiscriminate and imprecise, and may result in serious breaches of IHL. We condemn the use of cluster munitions by any actor, at any time. There is no acceptable use of cluster munitions. We oppose the development, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions by all

actors and we call upon those who continue to do so, to cease doing so now.

This commitment also extends to States not party to the convention.

Ireland reiterates our strong condemnation of the Russian Federation's illegal full-scale invasion against Ukraine. We will continue to do our part to support Ukraine and its people as they defend their country against the Russian Federation's unlawful aggression, in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter. We recall, however, that the use of cluster munitions, or facilitation of such use, must never be normalised in any circumstances. Actions that facilitate the use of these weapons, including their transfer, also threaten to undermine this norm.

President,

We fully understand the concerns posed by Russia's aggression and threats, in particular to those in Eastern Europe. These weapons, however, are outdated, unreliable, and ineffective, and pose known and unacceptable risks to civilians, both during conflict and long after conflict is over. Disarmament conventions are not obligations for peace time only, they are relevant especially in times of armed conflict. It matters how wars are fought. It is for this reason, we are greatly concerned by Lithuania's recent decision to withdraw from the Convention. Any State Party withdrawing from this humanitarian disarmament instrument risks a deterioration of the norms and principles of IHL. It sends the wrong message to the global community, in particular those who use such indiscriminate weapons. We call on Lithuania to suspend its decision to

withdraw from the CCM, and we call on all States Parties to renew their commitment to the Convention.

President,

Ireland is also concerned at the financial situation facing the CCM, which have contributed to forcing our meeting to reduce from four to three days.

Particularly in the challenging times facing the CCM, it is important that States Parties pay their contributions in full and on time.

President,

We look forward to collaborating with States Parties, civil society and other stakeholders in reinforcing the CCM, to renew our efforts in its implementation and universalization, and ultimately upholding the vital norm it has created, with a view to protecting civilians during and after armed conflict.

Thank you.