



## **CCM Intersessional Meeting**

**7-8 April 2025**

### **Australia – Opening Statement**

President,

Allow me to start by congratulating you on your appointment as President of this 13th Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Let me express my gratitude for your leadership and initiatives over the intersessional period. I preface my statement by pointing out that, as Australia's national elections have been called for 3 May, the Australian Government is currently operating under caretaker conventions.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions was born out of a collective determination to address the humanitarian consequences and unacceptable harm to civilians caused by use of these weapons. Regrettably, the norms established by this Convention are being challenged. Recent documented cluster munitions use in a number of ongoing armed conflicts has underscored the continuing threat that these weapons present to civilians.

More than three years on, Australia continues to condemn, in the strongest possible terms, Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine. Russia's invasion is a flagrant violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and we are seriously concerned over reports of cluster munitions use by Russia in Ukraine.

President,

Australia is playing our part to help universalise and strengthen implementation of the Convention.

We contribute to the CCM Implementation Support Unit and to the CCM Sponsorship Program. Australia continues to work with Pacific Island partners to clear Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in our region.

Australia has supported clearance and risk education activities throughout the Indo-Pacific, including in Cambodia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. These activities have contributed to clearance of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

We also work with Pacific Island partners on World War II-era unexploded ordnance remediation and related capacity building. Our longstanding Operation Render Safe, led by the Australian Defence Force, is focused on removing the dangers posed by explosive remnants of war in Pacific countries.

Australia supports the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) for mine action work, with a focus on our region. In September GICHD ran a workshop in Brisbane, Australia, for regional participants to build capacity in mine action. The workshop was a valuable exchange of information about the history and current challenges of World War Two-era explosive ordnance contamination in the Pacific. Participants called for more capacity development support and greater regional coordination on mine action work in the Pacific.

President,

We are encouraged by the progress made to mainstream gender and the diverse needs and experiences of populations in affected communities, as articulated in the Lausanne Action Plan. We commend the joint working paper on gender, diversity and inclusion submitted to the 12th MSP, which Australia co-sponsored last September. We continue to encourage all States Parties to ensure women's full, meaningful and equitable participation and leadership in disarmament processes.

President,

Transparency and the open exchange of information are critical to achieving the Convention's aims. In line with Action 46 of the Lausanne

Action Plan, we call on States in need of assistance in the preparation of their Article 7 reports to seek support from relevant partners.

I conclude by expressing Australia's sincere appreciation to mine action partners and operators globally, particularly those in the frontline of clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education and victim assistance efforts.

I thank you.