

**Cluster Munitions Convention**  
**13th Meeting of States Parties – Intersessional Meetings**  
**7.-8.4.2025**

**Item 3a - Universalization**  
**Statement by Austria**

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Mr. President,

Allow me to warmly congratulate you for presiding over the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and assure you of my delegation's full support. I also wish to thank the coordinators on Universalization, Norway and Peru, for the work they have already done and continue to do on universalising our Convention.

Since 2023, we have seen no further accessions to the Convention and we therefore fully support the focus that the Presidency has put on universalization. In this regard, we particularly commend the recent workshop that took place in Manila with countries from South East Asia and the Pacific. Austria, as coordinator on General Status and Operations, was glad to have contributed to the open and frank deliberations during the workshop. Keeping communication channels open with States not yet party to the Convention allows to identify barriers and hurdles for future accessions. We welcome the steps taken by Vanuatu to accede to the convention.

Several states outside the Convention have put moratoria on the production, use and transfer of cluster munitions and we welcome all intermediary steps that can be taken towards full accession, which is the essential objective to translate the often tacit respect for the norms into legally binding obligations.

Mr. President,

Cluster munitions continue to kill and maim civilians throughout the world and we deplore the recent increase in use and are alarmed by the resulting number of casualties. Europe is confronted by a brutal and the illegal war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine, which includes widespread use of cluster munitions. We are severely concerned by such widespread use by Russia of a weapon, that has been stigmatized and prohibited because they are inherently indiscriminate and cause unacceptable suffering.

Cluster munitions will never add to the security of a country or its people. Cluster munitions are a security concern, they are a threat for human security, during war- and during peacetime. There is ample evidence of this from all conflicts that we have seen, the immediate and long-term

impact of any use of cluster munitions for the civilian population has been extremely severe. Defending one's territory by using cluster munitions therefore comes at a severe price to the immediate and long-term security of one's own population. Cluster munitions remain hazard for decades after conflicts have ended, destroying the livelihood of communities and creating barriers for socio-economic development. All this is very well documented and the powerful testimonies of survivors speak for themselves in this regard.

In such times it is crucial to uphold international law, in particular international humanitarian law, and insist on the progress that has been achieved over decades in creating this body of law, including our Convention. Austria therefore regrets the withdrawal of Lithuania from the CCM on 6 March. We are concerned about the implications of this decision and call on Lithuania like on all States outside the Treaty not to use, produce, transfer or stockpile cluster munitions and uphold the norm if not as a States Party but as a member of the International Community.

Thank you