



**Statement delivered by South Africa on behalf of the African Group during the
Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

7- 8 April 2025

Agenda Item 3(a) Universalisation

Mr President,

The African Group congratulates Your Excellency, Ambassador Sorreta, as the President of the 13th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and expresses its full support to you in steering the work of the Convention during these challenging times. Your leadership and commitment are invaluable in ensuring the continued relevance and effectiveness of the Convention.

The African Group remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions globally, where many countries continue to suffer from contamination, with devastating consequences for civilians. Affected states still face significant challenges in addressing the legacy of these weapons.

Mr President,

Despite these challenges, the African continent has made significant progress in clearing cluster munition remnants, demonstrating a strong commitment to the objectives of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Several countries across different regions have successfully completed clearance operations, ensuring that previously contaminated areas are now safe for communities.

In Southern Africa, efforts have led to the full clearance of cluster munition remnants in some countries, contributing to regional stability and development. In West Africa, States have taken proactive measures to address contamination, with successful clearance operations allowing for the safe return of land to productive use. In Central Africa, ongoing clearance efforts continue to address contamination challenges, ensuring that affected communities can rebuild and recover. Meanwhile, in North and East Africa, states have been working to strengthen national capacities and implement risk reduction measures to prevent further harm from unexploded ordnance.

While efforts have been sustained, challenges remain in some areas where clearance operations are ongoing. Many African States continue to mobilise resources, strengthen cooperation, and enhance technical capacity to meet their commitments under the Convention. We therefore urge development partners to consider supporting the African

countries who are in the process of clearance and also provide more support towards victim assistance initiatives under the convention.

Mr President,

Recognising the critical role of the CCM in mitigating these impacts, the African continent is proud to be the region with the largest number of States Parties and signatories to the Convention. This underscores our steadfast and unconditional support for the instrument as a means to strengthen and complement international humanitarian law.

In light of the above, the African Group reaffirms its commitment to promoting the universalisation of the Convention and calls on all States that have not yet done so to join this vital treaty. Furthermore, we stress the importance of constructive dialogue and continuous engagement to prevent withdrawals and ensure continued adherence to the obligations of the Convention in accordance with Article 20.

We look forward to continued collaboration with all stakeholders to achieve a world free of cluster munitions.

Thank you.