



**Convention on Cluster Munitions
13th Meeting of States Parties
Intersessional Meetings**

Item 3(a): Universalisation

7 April 2025

Thank you to the coordinators for their presentation, and to the President for convening us in this important intersessional meeting.

As this is my first time taking the floor in this meeting, please allow me to reaffirm New Zealand's unwavering and unequivocal commitment to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We also reaffirm our commitment under Article 21 to the full universalisation of the Convention, as part of our shared goal of ridding the world of cluster munitions and putting an end to the suffering they cause.

We regret Lithuania's formal withdrawal from the Convention. New Zealand continues to condemn unequivocally Russia's illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and we acknowledge the significant security concerns that Russia's war has raised. We must also acknowledge that withdrawal from humanitarian disarmament conventions sets a concerning precedent, which could have long-term repercussions for the Convention, and for international humanitarian law and disarmament law. Several European states are now also considering withdrawal from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which is deeply concerning.

Under Article 21, sub-article 2, States Parties are obligated to promote the norms established by the Convention. Universalisation and strengthening the norm against cluster munitions is crucial, especially when the security context is challenging. New Zealand remains committed to promoting the Convention, including in our own region. We would like to thank the Philippines for hosting an excellent workshop in this regard in Manila last month.

We welcome and congratulate the recent steps taken by Vanuatu to accede to the Convention. Each new accession further strengthens the norm and stigma against cluster munitions. While our Pacific region, named for peace, is geographically distant from Ukraine, several states continue to manage the impacts of explosive remnants of war left over 80 years ago. We must learn lessons from this history, and protect future generations from these threats.

New Zealand is committed to working with all stakeholders towards this aim. Thank you again to the President, coordinators and the ISU for facilitating our collective efforts.