



Intervention made by South Africa during the Intersessional Meeting on Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) under Agenda item 3J (Challenges and concerns raised in developments in the context of the Convention and Humanitarian Disarmament at large)

07-08 April 2025

Mr President,

South Africa remains deeply concerned by the escalating geopolitical tensions that continue to unfold across many regions of the world. These tensions not only heighten insecurity but also exacerbate the risk of increased use and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions.

We recognize that, for some, these weapons are perceived as tools of deterrence and expressions of power in an increasingly polarized global landscape. However, we strongly believe that the solution to emerging threats and complex security challenges cannot and should not be the deployment of weapons whose devastating humanitarian consequences are well-documented.

Mr President,

Withdrawal from key disarmament conventions, particularly in response to shifting geopolitical alliances and pressures, undermines the spirit of cooperation and the norms we have collectively built. While we acknowledge the sovereign rights of states, we believe that the true strength of our multilateral system lies in remaining within these frameworks, engaging, discussing, and finding solutions together.

South Africa therefore encourage states to resist external pressures to withdraw, and instead to work with fellow States Parties to find constructive and context-sensitive solutions to the challenges they face. The answer must be found within the convention, not outside of it.

In this regard, we believe Article 21 of the Convention deserves closer scrutiny. Its interpretation and application may have implications for the future of this instrument, and we must approach it with care, clarity, and a commitment to preserving the Convention's integrity.

Mr President,

South Africa encourages States Parties to the humanitarian disarmament conventions to support those states that feel vulnerable, especially when confronted by threats from non-States Parties that may not share our commitments. Let us work to bring them closer and not isolate them. This is the true test of multilateralism not in moments of ease, but in times of complexity and discomfort.

Check against delivery

Only through principled dialogue, inclusive engagement, and mutual support can we ensure that the Convention remains strong and responsive in the face of today's evolving security landscape.

Thank you.