

Mister President,

Excellencies,

Dear members of the mine-action community,

First and foremost, Belgium reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This Convention remains a cornerstone of our humanitarian disarmament efforts and a vital instrument in the protection of civilians during and after armed conflict. The Convention's comprehensive prohibition on the use, production, transfer, and stockpiling of cluster munitions reflects our shared determination to prevent the unacceptable harm these weapons cause.

For Belgium, the Convention is not only a legal obligation but a moral imperative. We remain deeply concerned by the continued use of cluster munitions in various parts of the world, and we call upon all States not yet party to the Convention to join without delay. We welcome the Republic of Vanuatu to the Convention. Universalization is essential to ensure that the norms established by this Convention are respected globally.

Belgium wishes to stress the critical importance of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE). EORE is a life-saving activity that empowers communities to recognize and avoid the dangers posed by unexploded submunitions and other explosive remnants of war. It is a key pillar of victim assistance and humanitarian mine action.

However, risk education must not stand alone. Belgium advocates for an integrated approach that links EORE with conflict preparedness and protection (CPP) strategies. In fragile and conflict-affected settings, communities must be equipped not only with knowledge about explosive threats but also with tools to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to broader protection risks. This integrated approach enhances resilience and ensures that humanitarian interventions are both effective and sustainable.

Belgium will continue to support efforts that strengthen the implementation of the Convention, including through cooperation and assistance, and we encourage all States Parties to prioritize EORE and CPP in their national strategies.

Thank you, Mister President.