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United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Statement under agenda item 10 (a) - Universalization

Geneva, 17 September 2025

Delivered by ODA

Mr. President,¹ Excellencies,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the **twelve** United Nations entities involved in mine action.²

Excellencies,

Universalization remains a top priority for the United Nations. We warmly welcome the Republic of Vanuatu as the 112th State Party to the Convention and are encouraged by the presence of the Minister of Defense of the Central African Republic with us today, a strong signal of the country's interest in progressing towards ratification.

Preserving the human security principles at the heart of humanitarian disarmament treaties remains imperative. As conflicts rage around the world, the full adherence to and implementation of these treaties, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions, is a collective responsibility towards the

¹ Ambassador Carlos D. Sorreta, Permanent Representative of the Philippines.

² The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is an observer.



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protection of civilians from indiscriminate weapons. We urge all States that have not yet done so to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and contribute to eradicating these inhumane weapons without delay.

Previous speakers have mentioned the UN Secretary-General's global campaign to preserve humanitarian disarmament treaties and boost mine action efforts that was launched in June and will run until December of this year. The campaign is gathering momentum – engaging with Member States, NGOs, CSOs and those affected by explosive ordnance. Across the UN system, senior leaders have echoed its urgency, both through quiet diplomacy as well as in the various UN forums, from the Security Council to Human Rights Council. The Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict underscored the devastating impact of mines and cluster munitions on children. The UNDP leadership reminded us that mine action is not only about removing explosives- it is about restoring safety, rebuilding lives, and unlocking development. The High Commissioner for Human Rights called on States to uphold their obligations under humanitarian law and humanitarian leaders have raised alarm over the growing civilian harm caused by explosive weapons in populated areas. These voices reflect a shared commitment: preserving the humanitarian norms that protect lives and dignity. Under the umbrella of the Campaign, Senior UN leaders have continued to call for universal adherence to humanitarian disarmament convention, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and warned that withdrawals threaten their integrity and humanitarian impact.

ICBL-CMC and ICRC have issued official statements in support of the campaign's objectives, particularly the importance of upholding and implementing humanitarian disarmament treaties. UN entities organized social media outreach to amplify the campaign's messages during key events, including International Youth Day (12 August), World Humanitarian Day (19 August)



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and World Refugee Day (20 June). The UN has also been working closely with a small cross-regional Group of Friends to further the Secretary-General's campaign and to encourage support for humanitarian disarmament treaties, mine action and universalisation.

The Secretary-General's Report on Assistance in Mine Action for 2023-2025, disseminated last week illustrates the devastating impact of cluster munitions and other explosive ordnance on the lives of women, men and children – and calls for prompt universalization to eliminate the use of cluster munitions and the long-term harm that they cause.

Adherence to, and full implementation of, the Convention on Cluster Munitions must remain a global priority. We must collectively reaffirm our commitment to humanitarian disarmament instruments that safeguard civilian lives and uphold human dignity. As the Secretary-General himself has said - The urgency of this matter cannot be overstated. The protection of innocent lives depends on our collective action and commitment.

Thank you.

END