

Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties (13MSP) of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva, 16-19 September 2025

Agenda Item 10(k): Review of the status and operation of the Convention and other matters important for achieving the aims of the Convention: Implementation Support

Statement on the Implementation Support Unit's 2024 Annual Report and the 2026 Work Plan and Budget

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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

As this is my first substantive intervention in this Meeting of States Parties, allow me to begin by warmly congratulating you Mr. President and your team on your stewardship of the 13th Meeting of States Parties, and by thanking the Coordination Committee, States Parties, signatories, stakeholders and partners for their steadfast collaboration in advancing the objectives of the Convention. It is a distinct honour to serve this community as Director of the Implementation Support Unit.

Allow me to briefly congratulate Mr. Ricardo Labianco and just mention I look forward to working with you as soon as possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome Vanuatu to the CCM family, and I also look forward to serving Vanuatu in its capacity as 112th State party.

I will first provide a summary of the ISU's 2024 Annual Report before turning to a brief overview of the 2026 work plan and budget, both of which should be available as official documents of this meeting.

On the 2024 Annual Report:

The year 2024 represented an important period of building foundations, consolidation though discipline and strengthening for the ISU. The ISU delivered on every mandated activity, while also addressing long-standing gaps. Building on earlier efforts, the Unit advanced its role as both a technical facilitator and a strategic institutional actor, navigating a demanding operational landscape marked by complex challenges. At the same time, the ISU continued to reinforce its internal practices, ensuring disciplined, transparent, and accountable delivery underpinned by professionalism and reliability.

Regarding the **internal strengthening of the ISU**: alongside mandated activities, the ISU has taken steps to reinforce its internal foundations. These measures are not new tasks, but sound management practices to ensure the Unit serves States parties with the standards of professionalism and transparency that you expect. Under the guidance and with the support of GICHD Human Resource Department, I will mention a number of them:

Clear structures of responsibility: Updated Terms of Reference and performance review mechanisms, which was long overdue now ensure that every staff member works with defined functions and accountability lines. This makes the ISU support more predictable and aligned with implementation needs.



Professional and ethical standards: internal codes of conduct and internal practices embed integrity, collegiality, and competence- strengthening the trust that States parties place in the ISU.

Knowledge and institutional memory: Work plans, progress reports are systematically reviewed, analysed and documented, safeguarding institutional knowledge so that States parties always have reliable records of their implementation history.

Communications and outreach: new platforms and initiatives highlight the Convention's humanitarian impact and extend its visibility to wider audiences. This is not secondary work; it is essential for sustaining political will and advancing universalization. For example, during the international debate that followed the transfer of Cluster Munitions to Ukraine, both the Presidency and the ISU received numerous requests for information and clarification on the Convention. This demonstrates the importance of having a reliable and visible communications function to ensure that the Convention's voice is heard in a critical moment

Institutional cooperation: clarified working modalities with our host entity, the GICHD under the hosting agreement ensure that the ISU remains firmly focused on the Convention's priorities.

These measures form part of a process of continued internal strengthening, ensuring that the ISU is not only lean, but also predictable, disciplined, and credible in carrying out the mandates entrusted to it.

Delivery in 2024 - Tangible Results

The process of strengthening the ISU's internal practices was not an inward exercise. It was undertaken so that the Convention could deliver more effectively for States parties -and in 2024- this translated into concrete results areas across the Convention.

Peru, successfully completed its article 3 obligation, closing the chapter on declared stockpiles for the time being. This milestone not only underscored Peru's commitment but also offered a model of international partnership in advancing the Convention's implementation.

Article 4 extension request processes were significantly reinforced. A standardized template for draft requests to the Analysis Group was developed, reducing administrative burdens, improving the quality of first submissions, and supporting more informed decision making by States parties. For the first time, with UNDP's support, the ISU hosted a State party in Geneva presenting its draft extension request, creating space for early dialogue with stakeholders and for the Coordination Committee to engage directly with them. This was an important step towards making the Article 4 processes more predictable, transparent, and substantive.

Risk Education was established as a distinct thematic area of work in the Coordination Committee, with its own dedicated Coordinator. This ensured that an area too often overshadowed by clearance now has a stronger voice, greater visibility, and targeted support within the Convention's implementation architecture. The ISU with the technical expertise of GICHD were instrumental in facilitating this decision by States parties.

Universalization efforts a key collective responsibility of all States parties, were revitalized through the relaunch of the Informal Working Group on Universalization and new partnerships with actors such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the CRPD Secretariat. These links expanded the reach of the Convention into new multilateral spaces, while targeted outreach in international fora kept universalization firmly on the agenda.

The CCM Sponsorship arrangements were also reviewed and strengthened. What had previously operated on an ad hoc basis is being restructured around transparent criteria and clearer procedures, ensuring that scarce resources are used strategically, equitably, and in a way that donors can fully trust. This process is still underway, but steps already taken demonstrate how internal strengthening translates into greater transparency for States parties and greater accountability to contributors.

Normative Resilience: To address wider normative challenges, the ISU convened the first Stakeholder Dialogue, creating space for States, partners and experts to reaffirm the humanitarian and political value of the Convention. The Dialogue offered a quiet but meaningful contribution to wider efforts aimed at discouraging further departures from the Convention.

Finally, Communications and outreach were modernized with new tools and initiatives designed to highlight the humanitarian impact of the Convention and connect it with broader audiences. A particular emphasis at the request of the Presidencies was placed on youth engagement. These efforts helped connect the CCM to the next generation, ensuring that its humanitarian message remains vibrant and relevant in the years to come.

Each of these achievements demonstrates that institutional strengthening directly translated into results for implementation and universalization.

Financing in 2024 reflected both progress and persistent challenges. 70 (seventy) of 110 (one hundred and ten) invoiced States parties contributed a total of CHF 463,192 (*Four hundred sixty-three thousand, one hundred ninety-two Swiss Francs*) – more contributors than in 2023, but a lower overall amount compared with the previous year. The total was modestly below the approved budget, resulting in a 3 percent shortfall. Yet despite this, expenditure was contained at CHF 462,932 (*Four hundred sixty-two thousand nine hundred thirty-two Swiss Francs*) and every activity mandated by States parties was carried out.

Voluntary contributions once again played a decisive role. CHF 106, 249 (*One hundred six thousand two hundred forty-nine Swiss Francs*) was received under category 7(c), covering 22% of the 2024 budget. This extraordinary support from a group of States parties demonstrates the continued confidence placed in the Convention, even as it highlights the importance of strengthening participation in categories 7(a) and 7(b), to ensure predictability and stability for the future.

On expenditure, resources were directed with discipline and transparency toward the Convention's priorities. Staff travel was minimized, and funds were reallocated to strategic needs- including the engagement of specialized consultants. With a structure as lean as the ISU's it is neither efficient nor sustainable to maintain permanent staff for every area of expertise required. Reliance on short term consultancies has therefore always been a feature of the ISU model, providing flexibility, cost-control, and the ability to bring in specialized skills only when they are needed.

In 2024 these consultancies directly addressed deficits that had long limited the ISU's effectiveness. Communications for example, had previously been handled on an ad hoc basis, usually during MSP week, leaving the Convention without a lasting coherent outreach strategy. Specialist expertise made it possible to establish one- ensuring that the Convention now has a clear voice, wider visibility and stronger tools to advance universalization. Similarly, the ISU had operated without updated Terms of reference for its staff, relying only on generic job descriptions. With strategic expertise in results-based management, we introduced TORs and assessment systems that are standard in any serious institutions. These reforms were not abstract exercises: they brought clarity, accountability and alignment with the mandate I have received from States parties. These consultancies were not unilateral exercises: they



were discussed with the Presidencies. The rationale for their engagements and their deliverables were shared with the Coordination Committee. In this way the consultancies provided the ISU with professional capacities that it could not otherwise have sustained, and each translated into tangible delivery to State parties.

All of this was achieved in close cooperation with the GICHD finance team and under independent external audits. The 2024 audit reports for both the CCM ISU trust fund and the CCM sponsorship Programme were circulated electronically to all States parties. No irregularities were found, and the ISU's financial management was confirmed fully compliant with Swiss law. This is the foundation of the ISU's credibility: disciplined stewardship, transparent reporting, and results that match resources.

Mr. President, turning now to the 2026 Work Plan and Budget,

The year 2026 will be a pivotal for the Convention. The Third Review Conference will not only take stock of the progress made under the Lausanne Action Plan, but it will also shape the Convention's trajectory for the years ahead. This moment requires the ISU to provide unprecedented levels of support -substantive, technical, diplomatic and organizational- so that States parties can make informed, strategic decisions.

The context in which we prepare for 2026 is demanding: international tensions are rising, humanitarian funding is under pressure, and the core principles of international humanitarian law are being tested.

Against this backdrop, reaffirming the humanitarian and legal norms of the CCM is more important than ever.

The ISU's budget for 2026 stands at CHF 514'753 (*five hundred fourteen thousand, seven hundred fifty-three Swiss Francs*). It remains lean, operating with a very small team and maximizing efficiency through *in-kind* support and targeted expertise. But the scope and complexity of our mandate as we prepare for the Review Conference requires States parties to demonstrate their shared responsibility ensuring that the ISU is adequately resourced.

The 2026 Work plan and budget focus on strategic outcomes:

1. **A successful Third Review Conference:** Efficient organization of the Third Review Conference and its Preparatory Meetings, as well as all formal and informal CCM processes. This includes an effectively managed Sponsorship Programme that enables meetings and processes, with inclusive participation supported by a strategically managed Sponsorship Programme that enables broad participation, particularly from affected States, while ensuring balanced and diverse representation. I believe the measures put in place years past will bear their fruits towards the 3REVCON.
2. **Stronger compliance and ownership by States parties** in fulfilling their legal obligations, from the timely submission of complete Article 7 reports, to advancing national implementation measures under Article 9, to the declaration of completion or extension of Article 4 obligations, based on timely and substantiated requests.
3. **Revitalized efforts to promote universal adherence to the Convention**, with targeted outreach and advocacy undertaken by States parties and the ISU, reinforcing the Convention's norms and effectively countering regression.

In short, the 2026 Work plan and budget are lean, disciplined and realistic, but they are also ambitious where ambition is needed. They were designed to ensure that the Convention is not only prepared for the Third Review Conference, but positioned to emerge from it stronger, more credible, and with its humanitarian voice reinforced.



Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

In closing, for the ISU to deliver on these priorities, predictable, sufficient and timely contributions from all States parties are indispensable. Sustaining the ISU's work in 2026 is not simply about covering operational costs. It is about safeguarding the Convention's capacity to adapt to evolving realities and challenges, to uphold the humanitarian principles that underpin this Convention, and to ensure that the Third Review Conference lays a strong foundation for the next phase of our collective efforts.

On this note, I draw your attention to the working document on financial procedures of the ISU, CCM/MSP/2025/17 document, which is issued in fulfilment of the mandate given to the ISU and the presidency at the 7MSP to inform State parties on its financial procedures.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to make a very special thank you note, so to speak, first and foremost, to ODA for its support during an incredibly intense period in which the ISU was understaffed. We received support and encouragement from Melanie's office. Thank you very much, Melanie.

We would also like to thank GICHD, Dr. Sylvia Cataneo who generously supported us in delivering the analysis of the extension requests at a time in which it would have been impossible for the ISU to perform. Thank you.

In closing, Mr. President, it has been an honour and a pleasure to work with you and your team. Thank you for your support and your trust in the ability of the CCM-ISU to guide and advise you through the year.

To all of you, thank you.