

Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

17 July 2026

English only

Third Review Conference

Vientiane, 14–18 September 2026

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Review of the operation and status of the Convention and other matters important for achieving the aims of the Convention

CCM Political Declaration, at the occasion of the Third Review Conference – draft for consultations

Submitted by the Presidency of the Third Review Conference

1. We, the representatives of the 112 States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, together with representatives of signatories and other States, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Cluster Munitions Coalition and other international, regional and national organisations and institutions, gathered in Vientiane, Lao PDR, in September 2026 for its Third Review Conference. Inspired by our achievements, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to ending, once and for all, the suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions and to achieve a world free of cluster munitions.
2. Recalling that each State Party has undertaken under Article 1 of the Convention never to use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain, or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, cluster munitions, or to assist, encourage, or induce anyone to engage in any prohibited activity, we take immense pride in that the Convention has embedded an international norm against the use of cluster munitions which in turn has saved lives, prevented harm and enhanced the protection of women, girls, boys and men from threats and effects of cluster munitions and their remnants.
3. All 41 States Parties with stockpile destruction obligations have completed them, destroying nearly 1.5 million cluster munitions. The amount of land cleared and released for civilian use continues to grow year on year, reaching a record level in 2024, 18 per cent higher than the previous year. Eighteen States Parties have now fulfilled their clearance obligations, up from seven at the Second Review Conference. Risk education programmes have reached populations most at risk. Together, these efforts have saved countless lives and prevented injuries by reducing exposure to explosive hazards and promoting safer behaviour among affected populations.
4. While significant challenges remain, the Convention's pioneering provisions on victim assistance are making a tangible difference. Survivors are gaining improved access to medical care, rehabilitation and socio-economic inclusion, while States Parties continue to strengthen the lifelong protection of the rights of survivors, families and affected communities. The active participation of victims and survivor-led organisations in their communities and in the work of the Convention is a constant source of inspiration and a powerful reminder of the humanitarian imperative underpinning the prohibition of cluster munitions.
5. The achievements of the Convention extend beyond the humanitarian sphere. Its implementation strengthens multilateralism and reinforces an international order grounded in international law. It contributes to progress across a range of global commitments,



including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas and that of Children in Armed Conflict, while promoting peace and security, human rights and international humanitarian law. It also enhances human security¹, particularly in rural and conflict affected communities, by restoring livelihoods, enabling safe access to essential services and infrastructure, and supporting the safe return and reintegration of displaced and historically affected populations.

6. These achievements are due in no small measure to the strong partnership among States Parties, international and regional organisations, and civil society and to the early recognition of the support required for the Convention's effective implementation. This spirit of cooperation has fostered broad participation and sustained collective action. We remain committed to strengthening partnerships and reinforcing cooperation at the international, regional, national, and local levels in pursuit of our shared objectives.

7. Despite significant progress, much remains to be done to fulfil the Convention's objectives. Each year, too many people are still killed or injured by cluster munitions or their remnants. Affected populations remain at risk and community development is stalled by their presence. We must also acknowledge concerning geopolitical developments in recent years that risk undermining established norms, including new transfers and use of cluster munitions, which require a proactive response to protect civilians and safeguard the integrity of the Convention.

8. In this context, we deeply regret the first-ever case, in 2025, of a State Party exercising its national sovereignty to denounce the Convention pursuant to its Article 20, withdrawing from a multilateral humanitarian disarmament treaty prohibiting an entire category of weapons. We are concerned that such action may create a precedent with repercussions on the integrity and sanctity of humanitarian disarmament instruments and international humanitarian law. Recalling the legal obligation of States Parties to promote universal adherence to, and respect for the Convention's norms, we will redouble our constructive engagement with States Parties to prevent further withdrawals and with signatory States and States not party to encourage them to ratify, accept, approve or accede with the goal of achieving universal adherence to the Convention.

9. We are gravely concerned by the increase in civilian casualties, nearly half of whom are children, and by the humanitarian impact resulting from the continued, and documented use of cluster munitions by States not party. We are also concerned by recent reports of alleged use of cluster munitions in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. We call on the parties concerned to take all necessary measures to investigate such allegations and to provide information to all States Parties in a timely, comprehensive and transparent manner.

10. Recognizing that all cluster munitions, without exceptions, are prohibited, we underline that due to their wide area effect and high level of unexploded ordnance cluster munitions kill, injure, and destroy indiscriminately, causing unacceptable harm and severe suffering to civilians, and that any perceived military utility is outweighed by the humanitarian harm they cause and that the norms established by international humanitarian law and enshrined in the Convention function precisely as a guardrail to protect civilians in times of conflict or heightened insecurity.

11. We underscore our obligation never under any circumstances to use cluster munitions and, to promote universal adherence to and strict observance of the Convention's norms. Guided by the object and provisions of the Convention, we condemn the use of cluster munitions by any actor, under any circumstances, and discourage, in every possible way, the use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions calling upon all States and parties to armed conflict to cease such activities now and comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law.

12. Ending the era of cluster munitions requires universal adherence with the Convention. Progress in this area has not been as rapid as expected. Nonetheless, despite a deteriorating global security environment, [three] States have joined the Convention since the Second

¹ Notion of human security as understood in consensus UNGA resolution 66/290

Review Conference, recognizing the importance of reinforcing the norm against cluster munitions amid ongoing armed conflicts. Going forward, we will intensify our efforts to promote universal adherence to the Convention as an urgent priority putting forth concerted efforts by the States Parties and all stakeholders to foster the stigma against cluster munitions, ensure an increase in membership and further strengthen the humanitarian norms of the Convention.

13. Ending the harm caused by cluster munitions also requires the full and timely implementation of the Convention. Significant progress has been made, yet much remains to be done. We will take all necessary steps to advance this objective over the next review cycle.

14. We will make every effort to complete our time-bound obligations by the Fourth Review Conference through well-planned and prioritised survey and clearance activities taking into account the environmental and climate-related risks and impacts, with a view to preventing further suffering caused by cluster munition remnants until completion of clearance obligations. We will seek to accelerate clearance with a view to completing our obligations as soon as possible, and in any case within our Convention deadlines, and will share best practices with new States Parties in implementing their time-bound obligations under Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention.

15. We recognise the importance of preventing new casualties, including in areas of difficult access where opportunities for survey and clearance activities may be limited and will put in place effective and targeted risk education programmes for communities at risk, noting that the delivery of effective risk education interventions that focus on achieving behavioural change, remains one of the primary means of preventing new incidents, thereby mitigating the risks that cluster munitions pose to lives and livelihoods in affected communities.

16. While we aim for no new victims of cluster munitions, we recall that victim assistance provisions are enduring obligations central to the Conventions humanitarian objectives and that significant challenges remain for the needs of victims, including survivors, families and affected communities to be met and their rights guaranteed. We will increase efforts to address their needs and promote the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation of victims in the community and all aspects of society. We are committed to ensuring that assistance to victims is integrated into national policies and legal frameworks relating to the rights of persons with disabilities as well as health, education, employment, social welfare, poverty reduction and development plans supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

17. We recognise that strong national ownership, enhanced national capacity, and international cooperation and assistance are essential to the timely and full implementation of the Convention and must remain at the forefront of our collective efforts guided by predictable, sustainable and adequality resourced approaches. We will strengthen partnerships at all levels to support capacity building and reinforce national expertise with a view to reducing reliance on external support. We will explore new mechanisms for fostering cooperation and assistance, including those based on innovative financing, to jointly ensure the Conventions objectives and that no State is left behind in its implementation.

18. In implementing the Convention, we will take practical steps to address the different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations, and all ages, including persons with disabilities. We will strive to ensure full, equal, meaningful and gender-balanced participation of survivors and their representative organisations, and affected communities in the Convention's work and meetings.

19. We underline that effective implementation of the Convention contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals and the commitment to leaving no one behind. We will continue to strengthen synergies with the sustainable development agenda to maximise benefits for communities affected by cluster munitions.

20. We commit to intensifying our efforts to achieve a world free of the casualties, suffering and socio-economic impacts caused by cluster munitions. We reaffirm our resolve to fully comply with all obligations under the Convention, and to complete our time-bound

obligations with urgency. The Vientiane Capital Action Plan 2027-2031 will serve as an essential roadmap, guiding our collective implementation in delivering on this commitment.

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