

Cluster Munitions Convention

Third Review Conference

14.-18.9.2026

General Statement by Austria

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Mr. President,

We align ourselves with the statement by the European Union.

Mr. President, allow me to thank you and the government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for hosting us in Vientiane for this Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions as well as for your kind hospitality and the extensive preparation of the meeting. We commend Lao PDR as one of the most-affected countries with cluster munitions for the remarkable progress achieved and for sharing its experiences and expertise with the world. We believe that you have laid an excellent foundation for a week of constructive and productive work to successfully conclude this Conference by sharing your expertise and best practices.

In its 16 years of existence, the CCM has proven to be one of the most effective instruments of humanitarian disarmament, having saved countless lives in the process and reduced the threat of cluster munitions for civilians worldwide. Two-thirds of the world's countries now adhere to its values; global producers have decreased by a third; and States Parties have collectively destroyed nearly 1.5 million cluster munitions and 179 million submunitions, working towards ensuring these weapons will never be used again. Survivors and affected families and communities have continuously received assistance, although still more needs to be done to ensure that their rights can be met. In 2025, a record amount of land was once again cleared from unexploded submunitions and released for civilian use. These achievements need to be acknowledged and further strengthened through the implementation of the Vientiane Capital Action Plan, which will guide our work in the next five years.

We commend the fact that three states have joined the Convention since the Second Review Conference, namely Nigeria, South Sudan, and Vanuatu as States Parties. With now 112 States Parties and further concerted efforts towards universalization, we take another step towards a world free of cluster munitions. These accessions demonstrate the importance of the CCM as a landmark humanitarian disarmament treaty and they reinforce the global stigma against cluster

munitions. We hope to see a strong message on the norm against cluster munitions as an outcome of the Review Conference.

Mr. President,

Despite all this progress, however, the Convention on Cluster Munitions faces serious new challenges. Our work is not complete until cluster munition attacks as well as cluster munition remnants from previous armed conflicts cease to claim victims.

Our humanitarian disarmament treaties have been making a difference, and most critically so when civilians are most at risk, during armed conflict. The CCM has been established to reduce human suffering and contribute to ensuring a minimum of human dignity and human rights, based on the collective understanding that cluster munitions cause unacceptable harm. We underline our firm understanding that the Convention on Cluster Munitions makes an important contribution to our security and to the safety and security of our own population and is therefore firmly rooted in our national foreign and security policy.

Mr. President,

Europe remains confronted by a brutal and the illegal war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine. The extensive use of cluster munitions in Ukraine has caused hundreds of civilian deaths, widespread displacement, and massive contamination of farmland with unpredictable consequences for global food security. The Cluster Munitions Monitor speaks about further use in the Middle East and in South-East Asia, which further underscores the urgent need to reaffirm and defend the norm against these inherently indiscriminate weapons.

Austria condemns all and any use of cluster munitions by any actor and under any circumstances. Documented use of cluster munitions by States not Party to the Convention and non-state actors are cause for grave concern.

Mr. President,

As we convene for the Third Review Conference in 2026 in Lao PDR, this will be a critical opportunity to not only celebrate achievements, but also to respond decisively and reaffirm that the norm against cluster munitions remains strong.

We are deeply concerned about the impact that the continued production, development, transfer, stockpiling and use of cluster munitions have for the stigma against cluster munitions that this Convention has built over the 16 years. The CCM community needs to firmly safeguard

its norms. Any retraction from this remarkable humanitarian progress would have disastrous consequences for civilians.

Times of crisis and uncertainty demand decisive action. We therefore call on all State Parties to uphold and preserve the norms and principles of the humanitarian disarmament treaties and to promote mine action as an enabler for sustainable peace, development, and the full enjoyment of human rights.

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and call upon all States not yet party to join this landmark treaty, to protect civilians, uphold international law, and preserve this important humanitarian achievement for future generations.

Thank you.