

BELGIUM

**3rd Review Conference - Convention on Cluster Munitions
September 2026**

Universalization

Mr. President,

At the outset, Belgium warmly welcomes South Sudan, Nigeria and Vanuatu, who joined our family of States Parties since the previous review conference. Each new accession strengthens our collective commitment to protecting civilians from the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of these weapons.

Unfortunately, we also have had to deal with the first ever withdrawal from the Convention. It shows we are not immune to worrying trends in world affairs. But we have to acknowledge that the real test of our resolve lies in the face of conflict.

Current geopolitical tension and conflict may represent a more challenging context for our universalization efforts. However, when convincingly presenting the case for humanitarian disarmament, progress is possible even in States enduring conflict, as we recently have seen with the Ottawa Convention and the accession of Lebanon.

Belgium remains deeply concerned about the continued use of cluster munitions in conflict. The universalization and effective implementation of the Convention remain the only sustainable path towards ending the use of these weapons and preventing their devastating humanitarian impact.

Many efforts are undertaken in this regard, but there may be scope for a structured approach, including coordinated planning of outreach activities aimed at States not yet party to the Convention.

Furthermore, it would be beneficial to systematically record the outcomes of such outreach efforts, including the positions expressed by non-States Parties and the obstacles they identify regarding accession. Such information would allow future engagement efforts to be more targeted, more coherent, and ultimately more effective.

Mr. President,

Belgium remains firmly committed to the objectives of the Convention and stands ready to work with all partners to advance its universalization and ensure its full and effective implementation.

Thank you.