

Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

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

Reflections and options regarding the Convention's machinery: Coordination Committee and the role of the President*

Elements for consideration with regard to the Coordination Committee and the role of the President

Submitted by the President of the Third Review Conference

I. Introduction

1. Article 12.2 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions provides, inter alia, that the purpose of the Review Conference shall be “to review the operations and status of the Convention”.
2. The Review Conference provides an opportunity for States Parties to review the institutional machinery supporting the Convention and, where appropriate, consider how such arrangements may continue to support effective implementation of the Convention and the Action Plan to be adopted at the Third Review Conference (3RC).
3. In this context, States Parties may wish to take into consideration the experience gained and views expressed regarding the Convention's machinery, including Coordination Committee and the role of the President, with a view to ensuring that the decisions taken at the 3RC regarding the future machinery remain responsive to current and emerging implementation needs, while allowing sufficient flexibility to adapt to the circumstances and priorities of each annual cycle.
4. The present paper focuses on the Coordination Committee and the role of the President. It builds on existing decisions and practice and takes into account views expressed during the preparatory process for the 3RC. It identifies possible elements for consideration by States Parties without prejudging the substantive decisions to be taken by the 3RC.

II. Background

5. The Second Review Conference (2RC) decided that the composition of the Coordination Committee should remain unchanged, comprising the President, the President-

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



designate, the outgoing President and all the coordinators, with the ICRC, the United Nations and the CMC invited to participate as observers, while recalling that the Coordination Committee may call upon others to assist with its work, as appropriate. The 2RC also entrusted the Committee with functions related to reviewing relevant information provided by States Parties on the implementation of commitments contained in the Lausanne Action Plan (LAP), and established arrangements concerning gender mainstreaming and the analysis of extension requests under Articles 3 and 4.¹

6. The 12MSP decided to appoint a dedicated Coordinator for Risk Education within the Convention's machinery, with a view to strengthening the effectiveness of work in this area, facilitating monitoring of relevant indicators under the LAP and providing for a separate agenda item on Risk Education during Meetings of States Parties.²

7. Working Groups and Coordinators have continued to provide thematic leadership and facilitate intersessional exchange in key areas of the Convention. Coordinators are nominated by States Parties and appointed by Meetings of States Parties or Review Conferences, generally through an informal process based on expressions of interest. Their working methods have developed over time through decisions of States Parties and practice, with support from the ISU.

8. Since the 2RC, the Coordination Committee has continued to meet under successive Presidencies and has provided a forum for exchange among office holders and States Parties. It has supported intersessional coordination and continuity across thematic areas, while providing an important platform for consultation with and support to successive Presidencies.

9. Experience has also demonstrated that the availability of States Parties to serve as Coordinators and other office holders can vary from one implementation cycle to another. Working methods have remained largely flexible and informal, and there are no consolidated terms of reference or guidance covering the functions of Coordinators. This may create challenges for continuity, transition between office holders, particularly for newly appointed Coordinators.

10. The role of the President has similarly developed through decisions of States Parties and practice. The President presides over Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences and supports continuity during the intersessional period, including through engagement with the Coordination Committee, Coordinators and other elements of the Convention's machinery. While there are no consolidated terms of reference for the Presidency, this flexibility has enabled successive Presidencies to adapt their priorities and working methods to the circumstances of their respective periods of office.

11. The process for identifying future Presidencies has remained largely informal, based on consultations among States Parties and expressions of interest.³ This approach has enabled flexibility and broad regional participation, but may provide limited advance notice and time for transition and preparation between successive Presidencies.

12. In preparations for the 3RC, the Presidency circulated the working paper *Reflections and options regarding the Convention's machinery: Coordination Committee and the role of the President* (CCM/CONF/2026/PM.1/WP.3), which provided a basis for reflection on the functioning of the Coordination Committee, Working Groups and Coordinators, and the role of the President.

13. During the discussion of the working paper at the First Preparatory Meeting, States Parties highlighted the importance of the existing Coordination Committee, Working Group, Coordinators and focal points, while identifying areas where greater clarity and continuity could strengthen their functioning. Several States Parties supported clearer guidance for Coordinators, including on their fundamental role and functions, particularly to assist newly appointed Coordinators in assuming their responsibilities and to promote consistency and

¹ CCM/CONF/2021/6, para. 84.

² CCM/MSP/2024/WP.1.

³ CCM/MSP/2018/WP.3.

continuity across implementation cycles. At the same time, States Parties emphasized the importance of maintaining sufficient flexibility in how Coordinators carry out their functions.

14. Several proposals were made regarding possible additional thematic coordination functions, including on environment and climate, cooperative implementation under Article 8.1, universalization and norm protection. At the same time, other States Parties emphasized the importance of maintaining practical, flexible and cost-effective machinery and cautioned that any expansion should take into account existing arrangements, resource implications and the risk of duplication or unnecessary additional structures.

15. The preparatory discussions also highlighted the importance of incorporating gender, age and disability considerations, where relevant, across the work of the Convention. They further emphasized the importance of preserving sufficient flexibility for successive Presidencies to adapt their work to changing circumstances and priorities.

16. With regard to the Presidency, States Parties supported greater predictability and transparency in the identification of future Presidencies, including through sufficient advance notice to facilitate transition and continuity. Proposals were also made to consider greater engagement among outgoing, current and incoming Presidencies.

17. The discussions further underscored the importance of ensuring that any adjustment to the Convention's machinery remains consistent with the existing Rules of Procedure, decisions concerning the establishment of the ISU and other relevant institutional arrangements, and takes into account efficiency, available resources and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication.

III. Proposed elements for consideration

18. With the understanding that the following does not prejudge the substantive decisions to be taken on this matter by the 3RC, the Presidency presents the following elements for consideration pursuant to Article 12.2(a) of the Convention, focusing on the functioning of the Coordination Committee and the role of the President.

A. Coordination Committee and Coordinators

19. States Parties may wish to:

(a) consider the development, with the support of the ISU and in consultation with the Coordination Committee, of light guidance for newly appointed Coordinators, to be made available following their appointment and updated as appropriate by successive Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences, with a view to strengthening continuity and consistency while preserving sufficient flexibility for Coordinators to adapt their work to relevant circumstances and priorities. Such guidance could include, as appropriate:

- (i) an overview of the role and functions of Coordinators and their relationship with the Coordination Committee and the intersessional work programme;
- (ii) general working methods, including communication, coordination and reporting expectations;
- (iii) information on the support available from the ISU; and
- (iv) an overview of the thematic areas of work and their relationship with the implementation of the Convention and the Action Plan;

(b) encourage outgoing and incoming Coordinators, with the support of the ISU as appropriate, to facilitate the handover between successive office holders, including through the sharing of workplans, relevant information and lessons learned;

(c) encourage Coordinators, within their respective areas of work and as appropriate, to take into account relevant cross-cutting considerations reflected in the Convention and its Action Plans; and

(d) reaffirm the role of the Coordination Committee as a forum for intersessional coordination, exchange and continuity, including in supporting and advising the President and facilitating communication among Coordinators and other relevant elements of the Convention's machinery.

20. Regarding flexibility of the machinery, States Parties may wish to:

(a) retain flexibility to establish or assign additional thematic coordination functions where a demonstrated need arises, taking into account the existing mandates of Working Groups and Coordinators, the availability of States Parties to undertake such functions, resource implications and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication or institutional layers; and

(b) consider, where specific additional thematic functions have been identified, whether they should be accommodated through the establishment of focal points among existing Working Group Coordinators before considering the introduction of additional thematic Coordinators or new Working Groups such as on environment and climate, and cooperative implementation under Article 8.1 in the context of universalization and norm protection.

21. States Parties may also wish to:

(a) consider, where appropriate, whether corresponding adjustments to the Rules of Procedure, decisions establishing or governing existing elements of the Convention's machinery, and other relevant decisions of States Parties may be necessary to give effect to any changes to the Convention's machinery agreed by the 3RC and to ensure coherence among the Convention's institutional arrangements; and

(b) encourage the exploration of practical synergies with other relevant disarmament and humanitarian processes, where such synergies could enhance efficiency and complementarity, while respecting the distinct legal and institutional arrangements and memberships of the respective processes.

B. Role of the President

22. States Parties may wish to reaffirm the central role of the President in maintaining political momentum and continuity in the work of the Convention, while recognizing that the authority to adopt decisions rests with the Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences.

23. In this regard, States Parties may wish to:

(a) recognize the role of the President in providing political leadership and guidance on priorities identified by States Parties, while retaining sufficient flexibility for successive Presidencies to adapt their work to the circumstances and priorities of their respective periods of office;

(b) recognize the role of the President in facilitating the implementation and follow-up of decisions and initiatives adopted by States Parties, including through consultation and coordination with the Coordination Committee, Coordinators and the ISU within their respective established mandates and functions;

(c) promote the objectives and norms of the Convention, including universalization and implementation, through statements, outreach and other activities as appropriate;

(d) chair meetings of the Coordination Committee and facilitate intersessional coordination and continuity among the various elements of the Convention's machinery;

(e) report to States Parties on relevant developments in the intersessional work and on follow-up to decisions adopted by Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences; and

(f) support efforts to ensure that sufficient resources are available for the implementation support functions of the Convention, including the operations of the ISU and

the conduct of Meetings of States Parties, in accordance with relevant decisions of States Parties and within the established institutional arrangements.

24. In carrying out these functions, the Presidency should continue to work in consultation with the relevant elements of the Convention's machinery and within the mandates and arrangements established by States Parties, and in support of the collective decision-making framework of the Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences.

C. Predictability and continuity of office holders

25. Experience has highlighted the importance of continuity not only between successive Presidencies but also between successive Coordinators. While the voluntary and flexible nature of these functions has allowed States Parties to adapt the Convention's machinery to their circumstances, transitions between office holders can at times result in the loss of institutional knowledge, ongoing work and established practices.

26. States Parties may therefore wish to consider measures to strengthen continuity and predictability across successive office holders, while preserving the flexibility and voluntary nature of the Convention's arrangements.

27. With regard to Coordinators, States Parties may wish to:

(a) consider providing newly appointed Coordinators with sufficient information and opportunity to engage with outgoing Coordinators before or at the beginning of their period of office; and

(b) consider whether the timing of the appointment of Coordinators could, where practicable, allow for an appropriate transition period between successive office holders.

28. With regard to the Presidency, States Parties may wish to:

(a) consider establishing or strengthening a predictable and transparent process for identifying future Presidencies, with sufficient advance notice to facilitate preparations and transition;

(b) consider arrangements to enable an incoming President or President-designate to engage, as appropriate, in preparatory and transition activities before formally assuming the Presidency; and

(c) consider mechanisms for greater engagement among outgoing, current and incoming Presidencies, including, where appropriate, through the Coordination Committee, with a view to strengthening institutional continuity while preserving authority of States Parties to determine the Presidency.
