

**NPA Statement on Agenda item 8 – General exchange of views
Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Vientiane, 14-18 September 2026**

**Delivered by
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Thank you, Mr. President,

Please allow me to congratulate you and the Lao PDR Presidency for the successful leadership of the Convention and its inclusive approach throughout the year and for hosting us this week in Vientiane. We would also like to thank the ISU and the Coordination Committee members for their work and engagement in support of the implementation of the Convention.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions was born out of the shared commitment of states, international organizations, and civil society to address the unacceptable civilian harm caused by these indiscriminate weapons. Guided by this humanitarian spirit, together, we have turned commitment into action and achieved great results. Over the past 16 years after entry into force, the Convention has saved countless lives, driven significant progress in clearing contaminated land and reduced the threat of cluster munitions for civilians worldwide. In 2025, we reached yet another record in the amount of land cleared and released back to local communities, demonstrating the tangible impact of coordinated mine action efforts, sustained commitment and resources.

To be back in Lao PDR for the Third Review Conference - the country most heavily affected by cluster munition remnants even more than 50 years on - is a powerful reminder of why this Convention came into being, and why strengthening and universalizing the ban on cluster munitions is the only way to end the suffering caused by these weapons once and for all. NPA has been supporting Lao PDR's formidable clearance tasks since 1997, and we commend them for the remarkable progress and national ownership demonstrated over the years.

The Third Review Conference is a new milestone for the Convention, which will once again set the course for how we implement this treaty in the coming five years; adoption of strong and clear outcome documents is therefore essential. This week is an opportunity to send a clear message to a world growing increasingly violent that the safety and dignity of civilians must remain the highest priority and that any use of cluster munitions, by any actor, under any circumstances, is simply unacceptable and must be unequivocally condemned.

The Convention still stands as strong as ever. However, let us not forget that its strength also depends on States Parties' determination to defend it when it's being challenged, to meet their Article 4 deadlines, and to fully comply with all their treaty obligations. We therefore call on all States Parties

to reaffirm and strengthen their commitment to the Convention, stand firmly behind their commitments and legal obligations and do their utmost to protect the established norm against cluster munitions.

We are meeting at a time when the global norm and stigma against indiscriminate weapons, including cluster munitions, face unprecedented challenges. We witnessed the first-ever withdrawal from the Convention by Lithuania, and we are deeply concerned by the continued use of cluster munitions in a number of conflicts around the world. Equally serious are the reports of new instances of cluster munition use and transfer, including, alarmingly, on the territory of certain States Parties. NPA urges all responsible actors to cease such actions immediately, and we call for independent investigation and full transparency in line with the obligations and the cooperative spirit of the Convention.

As one of the largest clearance operators with decades long experience in dealing with cluster munitions and other explosive ordnance, NPA witnesses daily the devastating and long-term impacts these inhumane weapons have on local communities. We can testify that the danger these weapons pose has not diminished.

Mr. President,

There is also a troubling resurgence of claims that “advanced cluster munition technology” can justify the use of these weapons. We should remember that the prohibition on cluster munitions was based on clear evidence of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences. To date, no evidence has been presented to demonstrate that new cluster munition technology has overcome these concerns. Cluster munitions continue to leave large numbers of unexploded submunitions scattered over wide areas, posing a deadly threat to civilians long after conflicts have ended.

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you, and all delegations, to our side event on Wednesday at lunchtime, where we will present key findings of our recent report made in collaboration with technical experts that assesses these claims against available evidence.

Thank you.