

Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Lao People's Democratic Republic / 14-18 September 2026

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

São Tomé and Príncipe is honoured to participate in the Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held here in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

At the outset, allow me to convey our sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for hosting this important Conference, and for the warm hospitality extended to all delegations. We also commend the excellent organization and the spirit of openness and cooperation that have characterized our presence here.

The choice of the Lao People's Democratic Republic as the venue for this Conference carries a particular significance. The country's historical experience and the enduring humanitarian consequences of explosive remnants of war lend this meeting a profound moral and humanitarian dimension. In this context, the presence of the international community here in Vientiane is, in itself, a powerful reminder of the importance of our collective responsibility to prevent human suffering and to protect future generations.

Under the theme **“Accelerating Progress Towards a World Free from the Threat of Cluster Munitions,”** this Third Review Conference offers us a valuable opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved, to consider the challenges that remain, and, above all, to renew our common commitment to the humanitarian objectives of the Convention.

For São Tomé and Príncipe, the Convention on Cluster Munitions represents an important expression of our shared commitment to protecting human life and dignity and to reducing the suffering caused by weapons with indiscriminate and long-lasting humanitarian consequences.

São Tomé and Príncipe signed the Convention on 3 December 2008 and ratified it on 27 January 2020, with the Convention entering into force for our country on 1 July 2020. Since then, we have

remained committed to the principles and obligations of the Convention and to contributing, within our national capacities, to its effective implementation and continued strengthening.

Mr. President,

We meet at a time marked by profound international challenges. Armed conflicts and humanitarian crises continue to affect millions of people, with civilians often bearing the greatest burden.

These circumstances remind us of the continued importance of international humanitarian law and of our collective responsibility to promote the protection of civilians, particularly children, women, persons with disabilities and others in situations of particular vulnerability.

They also underscore the enduring value of multilateralism. The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a significant example of what can be achieved when the international community comes together around a common humanitarian purpose. Its continued success will depend on our ability to preserve that spirit of cooperation, dialogue and solidarity.

Mr. President,

São Tomé and Príncipe attaches great importance to the deliberations of this Third Review Conference and to the outcomes that will emerge from them.

The review of progress since the Second Review Conference provides an opportunity not only to acknowledge the important achievements made, but also to identify, collectively and constructively, the areas where further efforts are required.

We therefore welcome the forward-looking approach of this Conference, including the preparation of the **Action Plan for 2027–2031** and the **Political Declaration**, which can provide renewed impetus and practical guidance for the implementation of the Convention in the years ahead.

In our view, these outcomes should continue to promote national ownership, strengthen international cooperation and assistance, support capacity-building and contribute to tangible progress towards the full implementation of the Convention.

The road ahead will require sustained commitment, solidarity and cooperation. It is important that States Parties continue to support one another, while ensuring that countries facing particular capacity and resource constraints are not left behind.

São Tomé and Príncipe therefore encourages the continued strengthening of international cooperation, technical assistance and capacity-building, in a spirit of partnership and mutual support.

Mr. President,

This Conference provides us with an important opportunity to reaffirm our common aspirations and to look towards the future with determination and hope.

Our shared objective remains clear: to advance the universalization and implementation of the Convention and to ensure that future generations are better protected from the devastating humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions.

São Tomé and Príncipe stands ready to engage constructively with all States Parties and stakeholders and to contribute, in a spirit of dialogue and cooperation, to meaningful and forward-looking outcomes.

Let us seize this opportunity to strengthen our common commitment, preserve the humanitarian achievements of the Convention, and continue working together towards a world free from the threat of cluster munitions.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Abigail Tiny Cosme