

**NPA Statement on Agenda item 9a) - Universalization  
Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
Vientiane, 14-18 September 2026**

**Delivered by Kristin Holme Obrestad, Special Advisor**

Thank you, Mr. President,

NPA thanks the Presidency and coordinators – Norway and Costa Rica – for their commitment and continued efforts to advance universalization of this Convention.

Since its adoption in 2008, the Convention has established a strong international norm against cluster munitions. Two-thirds of the world's countries now adhere to the Convention's humanitarian objective. It has resulted in the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions containing more than 179 million submunitions, driven significant progress in the clearance of contaminated land and influenced policy and practice even among users, producers and those stockpiling that are not States party to the Convention. This is a clear reflection of its continued relevance and importance in the efforts to protect civilians from weapons that cause indiscriminate harm and long-lasting suffering.

Ensuring universal adherence to the Convention is essential to strengthening the global norm against the use of cluster munitions. We warmly congratulate Timor-Leste for today's decision on accession, and we are looking forward to welcoming them soon as a new member of the CCM community. We also once again commend the three States Parties - Nigeria, South Sudan and Vanuatu - that have joined the Convention since the Second Review Conference, reaffirming the continued relevance of the Convention amid a shifting geopolitical landscape and ongoing armed conflicts.

We are also pleased to see some of the signatory states and states not party to attend the Conference as observers, and we encourage them to take the necessary steps to accede to the Treaty and demonstrate their commitment to the protection of civilians and international humanitarian law. We urge all other States that have not yet done so to join the CCM without delay and contribute to ridding the world of these inhumane weapons.

Mr. President,

According to the latest Cluster Munition Monitor, new casualties from cluster munition attacks were recorded in 2025, reaching one of the highest annual totals ever recorded. Eighty-seven percent of those killed or injured were civilians. For the fourth consecutive year, Ukraine suffered the highest number of cluster munition casualties worldwide. This is deeply concerning and underscores the urgent need to strengthen and advance coordinated universalization efforts. NPA is committed to supporting such efforts as needed and calls on all States Parties to actively promote the norms and objectives of the Convention in line with their obligations.

Amid these worrying developments, the Convention also witnessed its first-ever withdrawal by Lithuania. A more demanding security situation or the fact that some states remain outside the Convention, cannot be seen as a justification for others to refrain from joining, for States Parties to not adhere, or even to contemplate withdrawal. It is precisely in such times that the Convention's prohibitions matter most and must be upheld, so that no more civilians have to endure the harm these weapons cause.

Universalization is critical to achieving the Convention's fundamental humanitarian objective of a world free of cluster munitions. It enables us to collectively address the devastating legacy these weapons leave behind and to commit to a future where their use is no longer tolerated. We hope this week's Review Conference will serve as a catalyst for new accessions, regional progress, and renewed commitment to the Convention.

Thank you.