

Joint Statement on Climate and the Environment
Agenda Item 9(c) Clearance and destruction of cluster munitions remnants
Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
14–18 September 2026

Thank you, Mr Chair.

This joint statement is delivered on behalf of the following members of the Environmental Issues and Mine Action (EIMA) Working Group: APOPO, the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), the Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEOBS), Danish Refugee Council, FSD, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), The HALO Trust, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), International Humanitarian Law and Youth Initiative (IHLI), Legacies of War, Mines Action Canada (MAC), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Mine Action Review, and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).

We thank the Coordinators on Survey and Clearance, France and Mexico, for their leadership on climate and environmental issues, including through convening the informative workshop on *Integrating Climate and Environmental Considerations into the CCM Vientiane Capital Action Plan (VCAP)* in June this year. We also acknowledge the important work undertaken previously by Italy and France through their 13MSP working paper, *Protecting the environment during clearance of cluster munition remnants*. These initiatives have helped bring greater attention to climate and environmental considerations and their importance for effective implementation of the Convention.

The impacts of climate change are intensifying. The years 2023, 2024 and 2025 were the three warmest years in the 176-year observational record. A new report from the UN Environment Programme makes clear that global warming will cross the 1.5°C threshold within the next few years, pushing climate risks and impacts to dangerous new heights. Across mine action programmes, we are already seeing the consequences for mine action. Extreme heat, flooding, heavy rainfall, landslides, wildfires and dust storms are affecting operations in many contaminated countries. They can impede access, increase operational stand-down days, move or expose explosive ordnance, damage marking systems, increase risks to affected communities and mine action staff, and make survey and clearance more difficult and costly. These challenges are only expected to grow between now and the Fourth Review Conference.

Review Conferences provide an important opportunity to take stock collectively and to ensure that the Convention remains responsive to evolving challenges affecting its implementation. We therefore commend States Parties for recognising the importance of climate and environmental considerations and for strengthening their inclusion across the Vientiane Capital Action Plan, including through specific actions and indicators. This will help ensure that implementation of the Convention remains environmentally responsible, climate-resilient, and relevant through to the Fourth Review Conference in 2031.

Importantly, the mine action sector already has practical frameworks and tools to support implementation. The revised IMAS 07.13 on Environmental Management and Climate Change in Mine Action, together with the accompanying Technical Note for Mine Action published in 2025, provides a practical framework for integrating sound environmental practices and climate considerations across mine action. We encourage all affected States Parties to develop and implement national mine action standards on environmental management and climate change, in line with IMAS 07.13.

There are many other examples of good practice already being implemented by national authorities and operators in affected countries. These include developing national standards and SOPs on climate and the environment; applying practical tools to assess and mitigate environmental and climate impacts, such as the Green Field Tool, including through pre-clearance environmental assessments; integrating climate risks into planning and prioritisation; appointing environmental focal points; regulating the use of machinery and controlled burning; minimising the environmental impact of explosive ordnance disposal; improving waste management and recycling; and transitioning towards greater use of renewable energy. We encourage delegates interested in these practical examples to consult the “Environmental policies and action” sections of Mine Action Review’s country reports as well as resources and tools on the EIMA working group’s website: environmentinmineaction.org.

It is also important to stress that the application of efficient and effective evidence-based land release methodologies can minimise environmental impacts. Using non-technical and technical survey to better define contaminated areas and release land where there is no evidence of contamination reduces the amount of land requiring full clearance, thereby avoiding unnecessary disturbance and potential environmental harm.

We urge States Parties to ensure that climate and environmental considerations remain a regular part of discussions in the plenary of Convention meetings, and we encourage States Parties to consider the designation of an environmental focal point, or focal points, within the Convention’s Coordination Committee to help maintain momentum and support implementation of the relevant Vientiane Capital Action Plan (VCAP) commitments.

The Convention community will soon have stronger commitments in the VCAP, and it already has more comprehensive international mine action standards and technical guidance on the environment and climate change, and a growing body of practical experience. The priority for the next five years must be to put them into practice.

We thank you.