



Kiribati Statement

Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (3RC-CCM)

Agenda Item: 9(f) International Cooperation and Assistance

[Observer State]

[Speaking time: 3 min]

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

1. The Republic of Kiribati is honored to participate in this Third Review Conference as an Observer State. We congratulate Lao PDR on assuming the presidency and express our deep appreciation to the States Parties for their leadership in humanitarian disarmament.
2. As an observer, Kiribati stands in full solidarity with the humanitarian spirit of this Convention. While our islands are fortunate not to be contaminated by cluster munitions specifically, our people live daily with a parallel humanitarian crisis: the massive, volatile legacy of hundreds of tons of unexploded ordnance (UXO) left behind from World War II.
3. For small island nations like Kiribati, these aging relics directly threaten human safety, restrict critical infrastructure development, and endanger our fragile coastal ecosystems.
4. Mr. President, Agenda Item 9(f) highlights a principle vital to the entire global community: no single nation can tackle the threat of explosive remnants of war alone. International cooperation and assistance bridge the gap between regional vulnerability and human security.
5. Kiribati's experience demonstrates how international partnerships successfully protect lives outside the formal framework of treaty ratification. Just this month, in September 2026, Kiribati concluded a major joint UXO disposal operation in the heavily populated area of Betio, Tarawa.

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6. Through an invaluable partnership between the Kiribati Police Service and the New Zealand Defence Force—generously supported by the Government of New Zealand—specialized teams safely neutralized and destroyed approximately 400 highly unstable legacy munitions.
7. This operation underscores that targeted international assistance works when it accommodates the extreme remote geography of the Pacific and prioritizes local capacity-building. It also serves as a premier example of how targeted technical and financial assistance from international partners can instantly mitigate immediate humanitarian risks in small island states.
8. Kiribati remains profoundly grateful to New Zealand, Australia and our international partners. We will continue to engage constructively with the Convention as an observer, working together toward a world entirely free from the threat of explosive remnants of war.

Thank you, Mr. President.