



*As delivered*

## **United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**

### **Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meeting 2025 Statement under agenda item 3(e) – International assistance and cooperation**

Geneva, 7 April 2025

*Delivered by Christelle Loupforest, Officer-in-Charge, UNMAS Geneva Office*

Mr. President,<sup>1</sup>

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities involved in mine action.<sup>2</sup>

Excellencies,

The United Nations remains committed to fostering new partnerships and strengthening existing ones, recognizing that international cooperation must operate at multiple levels—international, regional, North-South, South-South, bilateral, and trilateral—each reinforcing the other.

The 28th edition of the NDM-UN co-convened by the UN and GICHD on 9-11 April in Geneva will gather over 800 mine action leaders from national authorities, UN, NGOs and private sector to strengthen this unique professional network and foster collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organizations under the theme “*Safe Futures Start Here*”.

The United Nations welcomes the progress made under the Lausanne Action Plan (LAP), particularly in international cooperation and assistance. Many States Parties have successfully

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<sup>1</sup> Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations Office in Geneva, H.E. Mr. Carlos D. Sorreta.

<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is an observer.



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developed coherent national plans that promote national ownership, are grounded in comprehensive surveys and needs assessments, and outline clear requirements for international support.

However, challenges persist. The country coalition concept, which aims to foster targeted and sustained dialogue between affected States, donors, and implementing partners, remains underutilized. More efforts are needed to encourage affected States to leverage this framework to enhance cooperation and streamline assistance.

Excellencies,

The United Nations is committed to supporting States Parties in implementing the Lausanne Action Plan and actively engaging with all stakeholders in shaping the next Action Plan.

The United Nations mine action activities in cluster munition-contaminated areas are designed to strengthen national institutions and capacities. This includes:

- Supporting the development of national policies and legal frameworks for risk education, victim assistance, clearance and destruction of cluster munitions
- Providing technical advice and training for national security forces conducting clearance operations
- Promoting gender, age, disability and diversity mainstreaming and ensuring gender equality in all mine action activities
- Expanding youth participation, in alignment with the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda.

I would like to highlight that the UN Mine Action Strategy, updated in 2024, reinforces this approach, with a key strategic outcome focusing on strengthening national institutions to effectively lead and manage mine action. This includes:

- Supporting the development and implementation of national mine action policies, strategies, and frameworks;
- Ensuring that mine action is integrated into national policy, management, and budgetary systems; and



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- Strengthening national operational capabilities to address contamination effectively.

Excellencies,

The urgency of international cooperation and assistance cannot be overstated. According to the Cluster Munitions Monitor, the humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions remain severe. In 2023, 219 people were killed or injured by cluster munitions globally in 2023 and civilians accounted for 93% of recorded casualties, with children making up nearly half of those killed or injured by unexploded submunitions.

The use of cluster munitions by States not party to this Convention continues to be a grave concern, particularly in the Syrian Arab Republic, Myanmar, and Ukraine. Additionally, remnants of cluster munitions pose a persistent threat to civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Iraq, and Mauritania. The UN continues to work closely with non-State parties in many of these contexts.

Mr. President,

The United Nations emphasizes that international cooperation and assistance remain vital to addressing the devastating impact of cluster munitions.

Building and strengthening national capacities must remain at the core of our collective efforts. National ownership, supported by robust policies, well-trained personnel and adequate resources, is essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of mine action initiatives.

Thank you.

**END**