

Mr. President,

I want to first congratulate you on the way you have organised this Review Conference under difficult circumstances. We much appreciate your efforts and are very pleased that the Review Conference is coming to its conclusion.

Let me also reiterate our words of thanks to the presidency, the ISU, and the coordinators for all the work you have done, and a particular thank you for discharging your mandates for almost a year extra.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend Norway's sincere appreciation to the partners and friends in the mine action community who work tirelessly, and often at great personal risk, to keep civilians out of harms way.

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I do not want to belabour the points we made during the first part of the Review Conference. Yet, some points bear repeating under this agenda item.

By design, cluster munitions kill and mangle indiscriminately. Almost exclusively civilians. Unexploded submunitions menace societies and hinder development for decades.

With 110 states parties, the Convention sends a clear message: there is no acceptable use of this inhumane weapon. The reports of new use in Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Nagorno-Karabakh are deeply concerning.

We emphatically condemn the use of cluster munitions by any actor under any circumstance, and welcome strong language in the Lausanne Declaration on this point.

We must work hard to ensure the universalisation of the norms of this convention.

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But, Mr. President, as we pointed out in November: To be credible advocates, we must get our own house in order. We must eliminate the stockpiles in our own ranks, and double down on our clearing obligations in line with the best-practice of the International Mine Action Standards.

There is fortunately good news. Last year we celebrated that 2019 was a record year for land cleared of cluster munitions. This year **Mine Action Review** reports that the record is already broken! More than 135.1 square kilometres was cleared of cluster munition remnants in 2020, which is a new annual record! This is particularly impressive in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

2020 was also the year we celebrated Croatia and Montenegro's successful completion of cluster munition clearance within their original ten-year treaty deadline. Lessons can and should be learned from these two States Parties on the importance of clear planning for completion; strong coordination; application of evidence-based survey and clearance methodology; and not least political will. We were pleased to hear Montenegro's statement yesterday, offering to share their experiences and best practices on how to achieve their goals and obligations.

We believe that most States Parties with art. 4 obligations should be able to reach completion by the Review Conference in 2026. The only two exceptions are the most heavily contaminated States Parties, Lao PDR and Iraq.

To reach the art. 4 obligations by 2026 will take political will, effective planning, efficient land release methodology, and sufficient and sustained funding.

The implementation of the concept of Country Coalitions will hopefully play an important role in supporting progress. It is our firm belief that the open and regular dialogue that takes place in Country Coalitions – between the affected country, the donors and the operators – help to elucidate and address challenges in survey, clearance and funding and improves coordination. An open and transparent dialogue demonstrates strong national ownership and political commitment to completion.

Norway have had very good experiences with such country coalitions in Montenegro and Lebanon, and we wish to thank our partners there for the good cooperation. We welcome the establishment of a country coalition by Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and are very encouraged by the interest that Mauritania has shown in the concept. We encourage more donors and affected states to make use of this concept.

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Finally, a good action plan is a recipe for success. We salute the Lausanne Action Plan, which in our opinion is a great guide to our work in the next review cycle. The measurable action points and the indicators enable a baseline to be established and progress to be monitored. We welcome the inclusion of gender and diversity considerations, reference to environmental considerations, strong action points on mine risk education, and its coherence with the Oslo Action Plan.

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Mr. President

Norway remains committed to fulfilling its article 6 obligation to assist in the implementation of the Convention. We are currently funding mine action in about 20 countries, in direct partnership with humanitarian NGOs, such as the Norwegian People's Aid, HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group, Article 36, Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and Humanity and Inclusion, and with UNDP and Unicef.

We will continue to have a strong focus on the implementation of this convention.

Thank you.