



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

As delivered by

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Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to
the Conference on Disarmament and Ambassador-at-large for
Disarmament Affairs

at the

**Eightieth Session of the First Committee of the
United Nations General Assembly**

On

Conventional Weapons

New York, 23 October 2025

Chair,

In addition to the statement delivered by the European Union, I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Chair, excellencies, distinguished delegates,

In 2024 children accounted for 42% of casualties from cluster munition remnants. Similar figures exist for anti-personnel landmines. The use of these weapons continues to have devastating humanitarian consequences. Not only because of immediate casualties, but also because of the risks of long-term contamination following their deployment. The Netherlands strongly condemns and discourages the use of cluster munitions and anti-personnel landmines by any actor.

In particular Russia's widespread and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions in its ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine has not only resulted in grave humanitarian consequences, but also caused a serious negative impact on the global security environment. Against this background, the Netherlands regrets the withdrawal of several European countries from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), while

acknowledging the specific context in which these countries felt compelled to take this decision.

In our view, the protection of civilians should remain at the heart of our arms control efforts. We remain committed to both the APMBC and the CCM. We demonstrate this also through our financial support – nearly 80 million USD for 2025 – 2030 – for demining operations across the globe.

Chair,

While we recognize the opportunities and military necessity of autonomous capabilities, their development and use must be firmly grounded in international humanitarian law. And where the current legal framework does not suffice, clear and technology-agnostic measures are needed – to safeguard the international legal order and to give industry the framework for responsible innovation.

In recognition of these challenges, the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS has been mandated “to consider and formulate, by consensus, a set of elements of an instrument, without prejudging its nature.” As Chair of the GGE, the Netherlands commends the High Contracting Parties of the CCW for their constructive involvement. With two-thirds of its mandate elapsed and two formal sessions remaining, including for preparing

our report to the 2026 CCW Review Conference, sustaining the momentum is essential. We remind all interested States not currently party to the CCW of the possibility to participate as an observer in the work of the Group and to attend the briefing in Conference Room E at 13h15 today.

I thank you.