



2025 UNGA First Committee

Cluster statement: Conventional Weapons

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Affairs and Trade**

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Time Limit: 3 minutes

Thank you, Chair.

Further to the CANZ statement on conventional weapons, we provide some remarks in our national capacity.

We remain deeply concerned by recent withdrawals from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions by Poland, Latvia, Finland, Estonia, and Lithuania. While these are sovereign decisions, we underline that these Conventions are integral parts of the international humanitarian law and disarmament architecture. They reduce human suffering, and they offer explicit protections to civilians during and after armed conflict. As the global security environment deteriorates, we must reinforce these commitments.

We continue to condemn any use of cluster munitions or anti-personnel mines, and oppose developments that increase the likelihood of their use. We call for production, stockpiling, and transfers of these weapons to cease.

Chair, Ukraine is the victim of an illegal act of aggression by Russia and is unequivocally entitled to defend itself. Nevertheless, New Zealand is deeply concerned by Ukraine's purported suspension of its operation of the Mine Ban Convention. The Convention's obligations reflect a broader commitment: that humanitarian protections must not be set aside when they are most needed. Any assertion that the Convention can be 'suspended' during armed conflict is inconsistent with, and risks undermining, its humanitarian rationale, and could have negative, unintended consequences.

On a positive note, we look forward to the Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Lao PDR. Like the Siem Reap-Angkor Summit last year in Cambodia, this meeting is a homecoming for the Convention where we will celebrate its successes and agree an action plan to continue progress.

We also look forward to the Conference on the Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas in Costa Rica next month.

We reiterate our call for States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty to fully comply with their obligations. We make the same call on CCW High Contracting Parties. In this context, we highlight the importance of multilateral discussion on incendiary weapons.

Chair, New Zealand is pleased to be a main sponsor of the resolution on autonomous weapons systems, which highlights the important work of the CCW GGE, and supports its positive progress. New Zealand calls for effective multilateral rules and limits on autonomous weapons systems.

Thank you.