



Delegation of Italy to  
the Conference on Disarmament  
Geneva

**Convention on Cluster Munitions  
Twelfth Meeting of States Parties**

*10-13 September 2024*

***General exchange of views***

**Statement delivered by Ambassador Leonardo Bencini  
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Madam President,

As others before me, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the delegation of Peru for the sudden passing of Ambassador Diaz, Permanent Representative of Peru.

I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Francisca Elizabeth Méndez Escobar, for assuming the responsibility of chairing this meeting, and express our gratitude to you, the Coordination Committee, the Secretariat and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and its Director, Ms. Pamela Moraga, for the work conducted over the past year.

Madam President,

Italy is fully committed to fulfill its obligations under this Convention and reaffirms its determination to put an end to the suffering caused by cluster munitions. Over the period 2023-2025, Italy is also particularly proud to be co-coordinator for clearance and risk education and sit in the Coordination Committee.

In Italy's view, increasing international tension and conflicts make the imperative of a world free of cluster munitions even more urgent. Although mindful of the reasons and

responsibilities for the progressive erosion of the international security architecture, we take note with concern of recent developments within the CCM. Withdrawal from a core humanitarian and disarmament treaty sets a precedent that weakens the norm and poses a threat to the universalization of the CCM and thereby to the civilians who benefit from its protection.

Italy also regrets that several States, including the major possessors and producers, are still not parties to the Convention. We urge all States not yet Parties to join the CCM without further delay.

Madam President,

Italy firmly condemns Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and calls on Russia to immediately withdraw all its military forces from the internationally recognised territory of Ukraine.

Italy is deeply concerned by the use of cluster munitions in Ukraine. According to the 2023 Cluster Munition Monitor, Russia has used cluster munitions extensively since invading Ukraine on 24 February 2022, causing hundreds of civilian casualties and damaging homes, hospitals and schools and contaminating agricultural lands. The Monitor also reports that Russia continued to produce new cluster munitions in 2022, including at least two newly developed types that its forces have used in Ukraine

Civilians continue to represent the vast majority of victims, with a significant impact also on children. This is a trend we need to stop. We reiterate our firm condemnation of the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions by any actor, and urge all States and non-State actors to refrain from it.

Madam President,

Since the beginning of the negotiating process, Italy has supported the Convention and engaged in fulfilling its national obligations. After completion of our national obligations, we continue to attach great importance to our responsibility to provide technical, material, and financial assistance to States Parties still affected by remnants of cluster munitions.

Since the institution of the "Italian Humanitarian Mine Action Fund" in 2001, the Italian Cooperation has devoted more than 80 million euros to humanitarian mine action

programmes, focusing on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education and victim assistance.

Let me also reaffirm that Italy highly values gender and diversity mainstreaming in the work of the CCM and we commend the activities of the gender focal points conducted throughout this year. In this vein, we co-sponsored a joint cross-regional statement on gender equality and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities that will be delivered this week and a dedicated working paper for which we would like to thank Belgium and Germany as well as UNIDIR.

Madam President,

Before concluding, allow me to express our belief that, working for the objective of a world free of cluster munitions, we share the parallel aspiration to a world free of anti-personnel mines, as well as of any other explosive remnants of war.

Being party to both the Oslo and Ottawa Conventions, Italy pays special attention to the development of all possible synergies between them and with other relevant international forums. To this end, Italy has been proud to chair the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) in 2023 and 2024. This Group coordinates at global level humanitarian mine action programs, harmonizes priorities and increases donor support in the sector.

Thank you, Madam President.