

## Developing stronger standards to protect civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas

Thursday 26 May 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 New York / 16:00 – 17:30 Geneva (on Zoom)



A residential building was hit by missiles in Kyiv on Feb. 25.  
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The use of heavy explosive weapons in populated areas has disastrous consequences for the protection of civilians. People are at grave risk of death and serious injury, while damage to and destruction of housing and essential infrastructure, including hospitals and schools, power networks, and water and sanitation systems, causes yet more harm and has long-lasting consequences for communities and their well-being.

The panel will discuss the problem of explosive weapons with reference to recent research in Ukraine, Gaza and Ethiopia. It will also look at how an international political declaration to better protect civilians from the use of explosive weapons, which will soon be agreed by States, has the potential to provide a framework for reducing harm and strengthening the protection of civilians over the long-term.

**Chair:** Amb. Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

**Mr. Rich Weir** (Human Rights Watch) will present findings from field research in Ukraine involving the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, and examples from research in other locations including Gaza and Ethiopia, highlighting the impact on people, infrastructure and services.

**Mr. Aurelien Buffler** (OCHA) will discuss the UN's approach to addressing the humanitarian consequences of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, including within the context of the Protection of Civilians Agenda.

**Ms. Laura Boillot** (INEW), will speak about how implementing commitments in a political declaration can help to prevent and respond to harms caused by explosive weapons.

**Dr. Eirini Giorgou** (ICRC), will give examples of how changes to military policy and practice, including implementation of an avoidance policy regarding the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas, can help to strengthen the protection of civilians and facilitate respect for IHL.

**Register for this event on Zoom at:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_iVHmpxBNRdeIVRdYFysD9w](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iVHmpxBNRdeIVRdYFysD9w)