



Statement for session 3 on assisting conflict affected communities on behalf of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW)

The first international follow-up conference to the adoption of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas

Oslo, 23 April 2024

Delivered by Ms. Mimidoo Achakpa

Thank you Chair,

I speak on behalf of The International Network on Explosive weapons – INEW.

Assisting the victims of explosive weapons, their families and communities affected by armed conflict is crucial and urgent - and a clear commitment in the political declaration.

As we have heard from previous speakers today, and as recognized in the Declaration's preamble, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas has a devastating impact on the civilian population in both the short- and long-term.

Beyond the thousands of people killed every year, the survivors of explosive weapons often require access to immediate and long-term healthcare, psychological and psycho-social support and access to employment and economic assistance.

Conflict-affected populations require access to food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education, as well as protection, including from further violence.

The use of explosive weapons in towns and cities results in contamination by explosive ordnance, which is particularly complicated to deal with in urban areas. Both the use, and the remnants of explosive weapons impede humanitarian access and the provision of critical services, as well as hampers development. It leaves massive amounts of debris, waste and toxic chemicals.

The continued, heavy toll on civilians from bombing and shelling in cities and towns is unacceptable - but this Declaration provides hope for the future.

Assisting victims and conflict affected communities – spelled out in commitments 4.4 to 4.6 can be done in a number of ways.

It will involve responding to the needs of individuals, as well as the needs of affected communities.

Measures states can take include:

- Timely financial support to humanitarian organizations – both local and international.
- Mobilizing national and international resources to assist victims and communities.
- Waiving duties and charges on humanitarian goods.
- Facilitating rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access.
- Collecting, sharing, and making publicly available disaggregated data on the direct and indirect effects of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Including locations of areas contaminated by unexploded ordnance.
- Funding research into increasing our knowledge about direct and reverberating effects of explosive weapons.
- As well as: ensuring the protection of medical facilities and healthcare workers.

INEW would like to refer to our [questions and answers publication](#) and our [implementation framework](#) for further elaborations.

Being part of this Declaration is a recognition of a grave humanitarian problem. It is an expression of solidarity with those affected. And it is a commitment to take further action to strengthen the protection of civilians both during and after armed conflict.

We have a long path ahead of us - one that will require committed and sustained work from all of us, in the spirit of partnership and collaboration that has been the hallmark of the process to date.

Thank you