



MEDIA ADVISORY

States to meet in Oslo to review progress made on Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons, 23 April 2024

- The conference to review implementation on the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas will be hosted by the government of Norway and will take place in Oslo, on 23 April, 2024.
- This conference is the first international follow-up conference to review implementation of the Political Declaration since the high-level international conference in Dublin to adopt the Political Declaration on 18 November, 2022, which saw the Declaration formally adopted by 83 states. ¹There are currently 86 states who have endorsed the Declaration as of April 12 2024.
- The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is the leading cause of civilian casualties in contemporary armed conflicts, and this Political Declaration is the first formal international recognition that this must be addressed urgently and directly.
- INEW calls on all states to endorse the Declaration which aims to reduce civilian harm and strengthen the protection of civilians, by imposing limits on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and by assisting victims and affected communities during and after conflict.
- On the eve of the Review Conference, civil society organisations, campaigners and survivors of armed conflict gather at the Protection Forum to bring attention to the needs of people and communities affected by explosive weapons.

MEDIA CONTACT

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KEY MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY 21 APRIL, 17:00-21:00

FOR SAMA SCREENING AND Q&A

At Cinemateket, Dronningens gt. 16, 0105, Oslo, find information [here](#)

A cinema screening of the Oscar nominated and BAFTA award-winning film, 'For Sama' will be held at Cinemateket, followed by a reception and Q&A with the filmmakers, Hamza and Waad al-Kateab, as well as representatives of the Norwegian Red Cross and INEW.

¹ [States that have endorsed the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#)

For Sama is an intimate journey into the female experience of war. A love letter from a young mother to her daughter, the film tells the story of Waad al-Kateab's life through five years of the uprising in Aleppo, Syria as she falls in love, gets married and gives birth to Sama, all while cataclysmic conflict rises around her. The film shows the civilian reality and experience living through bombing and warfare. It shows the impact beyond the numbers, and is a testimony of civilians having to live through the ongoing threats and bombardments.

MONDAY 22 APRIL, 11:00 - 16:00
THE PROTECTION FORUM

At Red Cross Norway, Hausmanns gate 7, 0186 Oslo, find information [here](#)

Activists gather at the Protection Forum in Oslo featuring recent civilian survivors of armed conflict. The forum, hosted by the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW) and Norwegian Red Cross, involves states, international NGOs, civil society representatives including people who have lived through bombing and shelling in conflict affected areas such as Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Ethiopia, and Pakistan. The Forum takes place in advance of the international review conference of the Political Declaration to protect civilians from explosive weapons in populated areas, led by the Norwegian Government.

The Protection Forum is aimed at providing a space to bring attention to the needs of people and communities affected by explosive weapons, and in a format that is conversational, interactive and with a focus on bringing to the fore the voices of people with lived experiences. The event will look at the civilian and humanitarian problems caused by explosive weapons and will discuss the action required by states to implement the Political Declaration.

Speakers at the forum include:

- **Nujeen Mustafa**
A Syrian survivor of armed conflict and activist who fled her homeland at 16 years old and author of the book "A girl from Aleppo"
- **Dr. Hamza Al-Kateab**
A doctor who ran one of the last functioning hospitals in Aleppo and who featured in award-winning film "For Sama"
- **Dr. Younis Al Khatib**
President of the Palestine Red Crescent Society
- **Vladyslav Vladov**
Volunteer and incident commander at Ukrainian Red Cross Society who visits settlements in the frontline

11:00 'Stop Bombing Civilians' live street artwork and photo opportunity

An opportunity to take a photo of the "Stop Bombing Civilians" live street art performance. Artists from around Europe, including ZDESROY from Ukraine will create a painting on a shipping container in the backyard of the venue during the conference day. The artwork will take centre-stage outside the NorCross Office, with key spokespersons Nujeen Mustafa, a Syrian survivor of armed conflict and activist who fled her homeland aged 16; and Dr. Zahed 'Hamza' Al-Kateab, an emergency doctor who ran one of the last functioning hospitals in Aleppo, Syria and who features in the BAFTA award-winning film "For Sama" by Waad Al-Kateab.

TUESDAY 23 APRIL, 09:00 - 18:00

OPENING CEREMONY AT 9:00

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECLARATION TO PROTECT CIVILIANS FROM EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN POPULATED AREAS

At Radisson Plaza Hotel Oslo, Sonja Henies plass 3, 0185 Oslo, Norway, find information [here](#)

Media/Press accreditation to the formal conference must be registered separately [HERE](#).

Please note that accreditation is not finalised until confirmed by the NMFA Communications Unit.

The Norwegian Foreign Ministry will host the high-level international review conference, which will see states review progress on implementation of the Political Declaration as well as give non-endorsing states the opportunity to endorse.

The opening will consist of introductory remarks by high-level participants, focusing on the relevance of the Declaration and the humanitarian impacts of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, including testimonies of lived experiences. The opening session will set the stage for the Conference by highlighting the urgent need to strengthen the protection of civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Speakers include:

- **Andreas Kravik**
State Secretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway
- **Rear Admiral Bjørn-Erik Martinsen**
Deputy of the Norwegian Defence Staff
- **Ambassador Noel White**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Geneva
- **Melanie Regimbal**
Chief of Service of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs' Geneva Office
- **Marwa Almbaed**
Survivor from Syria
- **Dr. Al Khatib**
President of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society
- **Radhya al-Mutawakel**
Representative for the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW)

KEY RESOURCE LINKS:

- [BACKGROUND INFORMATION](#)
- [MEDIA KIT](#)

Declaration text: "[Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#)", www.dfa.ie/EWIPA

Read INEW's [Q&A on the issue and implementation of the Declaration here](#). Access [other INEW resources here](#)