



**Statement for session 2 on understanding direct and indirect effects 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 Roos Boer

Thank you Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the International Network on Explosive Weapons - INEW. Collecting and sharing data on explosive weapons use, and on the impact of such use on civilians is a prerequisite for understanding harm to civilians- It is necessary for responding to needs, and for informing change.

As such, the importance of data collection and sharing by different actors is firmly recognized in the Political Declaration, and since November 2022, is also a fundamental prerequisite for states as part of their implementation.

Organisations, including within our civil society network, have collected and will continue to collect data, qualitative and quantitative, on the impact from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. The Explosive Weapons Monitor report for 2023, that was launched yesterday, is one example of such efforts.

Meeting the data-collection commitments in paragraphs 4.2 and 3.4 could be achieved in part through the practice of civilian harm tracking.

This is not a new practice and has been implemented by a range of armed forces in different contexts. It is an internal process to systematically gather data on - for example - civilian deaths and injuries, property damage or destruction. Such data should help to inform policies designed to avoid civilian harm.

Furthermore, states need to collect disaggregated data on the direct, and indirect impacts. Such data is necessary to implement commitments under 3.4 which is to: "take into account direct and indirect effects which can be reasonably foreseen, in the planning of operations, and identify lessons learned."

Third parties often have important and credible information relating to civilian harm incidents which can supplement and further inform the understanding of those incidents by armed forces.

In addition to giving a clear role to states and, by extension their armed forces, in collecting and sharing data, paragraph 4.2 is significant in that it clearly signifies that data should be collected on both the direct and indirect effects of the use of explosive weapons.

Data collection is not only about capturing data on the number of civilians killed and injured by explosive weapons, but on the knock-on and longer-term impacts as well, such as damage to healthcare and other essential infrastructure.

Mechanisms to collect data should therefore be adapted or established to also include these indirect and longer term effects.

The sharing of data on the use of explosive weapons, including location, types and numbers of munitions, as well as their direct and indirect impact, will enhance an understanding of the effects on civilians.

It will increase transparency, and give other actors including victims, the UN, ICRC and civil society organisations the opportunity to access this information, to increase accountability, and strengthen the protection of civilians, including through risk education, Explosive Remnants of War marking and clearance.

Thank you chair.