



## **BELGIUM**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Review Conference - Convention on Cluster Munitions November 2020**

#### **Universalization**

Belgium aligns itself with the general statement delivered by the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Belgium wishes to welcome Saint Lucia, Niue, Sao Tomé and Príncipe and the Maldives as the most recent countries acceding to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which now counts 110 states parties.

The Convention entered into force ten years ago. The family of States Parties has grown year after year, illustrating the continued relevance of the Convention. Despite our efforts we have nevertheless failed to meet the objective set by the Dubrovnik Action Plan, namely to reach 130 States Parties by 2020. In the meantime, cluster munitions are employed and they continue to inflict indiscriminate harm in different parts of the world. Belgium is concerned about the continued use of cluster munitions in Syria, Libya and Yemen and about the recent use in the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Cluster munition weapons have no place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Universalization and effective implementation of the convention are the only way to put an end to the use of these weapons and their devastating impact on civilians.

We welcome the suggestions put forward in Conference Paper 12 on actions to promote universal adherence to the Convention and its norms. These efforts could be further operationalized through a work programme which includes a coordinated planning for the outreach activities. It would also be useful to have a record of the outcome of this outreach, detailing the positions of the States non-Parties and identifying obstacles to their accession to the Convention. This will render follow-on outreach efforts better focused and more effective.