

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE TO THE FOURTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION ON  
CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

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In its 31st year, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons continues to serve as a pillar of International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian action.

It remains a flexible and dynamic framework, making a tangible difference in the lives of people caught in the cross-hairs of conflict.

I welcome the focus of this Review Conference on addressing the horrendous impact of cluster munitions. The UN family of agencies, in its wide-ranging work on the ground, has come across many types of cluster munitions. This experience sends a clear message that cluster munitions used to date cause unacceptable harm to civilians. I urge you to keep this in mind when discussing the balance between military needs and humanitarian concerns, which remains the cornerstone of the CCW framework.

Looking beyond the Review Conference, let me mention two fields in which the United Nations would highly value further progress:

First: anti-vehicle mines. These weapons continue to cause many casualties, increasingly among civilians. They restrict the movement of people and aid, make land unsuitable for cultivation, and deny citizens access to water, food, care and trade.

Second: we are increasingly alarmed by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, which leads to profound suffering among civilian populations.

At the same time, accelerating progress on CCW universalization and ensuring its full and effective implementation continue to be high priorities.

Progress in all these areas would be a significant advance in international humanitarian law.

I call on all States, international organizations, and civil society to continue the quest for solutions in diminishing the burden of conflict on civilians.

I wish you every success in your deliberations.