

Thematic workshops on implementation of the Political Declaration

09:30-12:00, 24 April 2024,

Olympia and Film Rooms, Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Oslo

Programme and background information

Background information

As an extension of the Conference and the Protection Forum on 22–23 April, two thematic workshops will be organised on the morning of 24 April by members of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), in collaboration with international organisations and states. The discussions are open to representatives of government, armed forces, civil society and international organisations, and all conference participants have been invited to stay on and take part.

The workshops will take place in the Radisson Blu Plaza (the same venue as the official conference on 22 April) and will provide participants with the opportunity to engage in a more in-depth discussion on key aspects of the Declaration related to 1) **military policies and practices** or 2) **humanitarian access and assistance to conflict affected communities**, engaging participants in detailed/substantive discussions on key areas of implementation, with a mixed group of participants in both.

Conference participants are encouraged to attend and can select either workshop regardless of affiliation: although a written summary of discussions will be made, both workshops will be conducted under the Chatham House rule.

The programme for the workshops is as follows and is also available online at <https://www.inew.org/events/osloworkshop/>

09:00–09:30 Coffee available and registration

2nd Floor, entrance to Olympia Room.

09:30–10:00 Opening of workshop in plenary

Introduction to the workshops and moderators.

10:00–11:30 Parallel workshop sessions

Workshop on military policies and practices (*Film Room*)

This workshop session will focus on commitment 3.3. and measures that can be taken in policy and practice to help avoid civilian harm by restricting or refraining from use of explosive weapons in populated areas in policy and in practice, as a central commitment in the Declaration aimed at limiting use. It would also link to other actions required under the Declaration that support implementation, including data gathering and taking into account the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects from military operations involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (3.4, 4.2), as well as conducting battle damage and other assessments, training, and

planning (3.2). Discussion will focus on – but will not be limited to – the following questions.

- What are some of the key factors and understandings of risks concerning the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and how can these be used to guide effective operational and policy responses?
- How can armed forces help to avoid civilian harm by restricting or refraining from use of explosive weapons in populated areas in both policies and practice (commitment 3.3)? How can other commitments in the Declaration help to support understandings and drive processes of work to help avoid civilian harm, including understanding direct and indirect effects, conducting battle damage assessments and other lessons learned (3.4), conducting training (3.2) etc?
- What practical examples of helping to avoid civilian harm by restricting or refraining from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, can participants share from their own experiences? How can such examples best be applied?
- How can the EWIPA Declaration be best shared amongst and within military forces and at what level, and what additional guidance or support is necessary to support implementation? How can other stakeholders best support implementation of these commitments?

Moderator: Stephen Kilpatrick, Article 36

See also discussion paper: [“Avoiding civilian harm by restricting or refraining from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas”](#)

Workshop on the humanitarian impacts of explosive weapons (Olympia Room)

During this workshop participants will gain an understanding of the Political Declaration commitments 3.5, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6¹, and will focus on the overarching topic of access to healthcare for conflict-affected populations in contexts where explosive weapons are being used in populated areas.

Through engaging discussions and collaborative efforts, participants will delve into strategies and challenges related to access to healthcare in areas affected by explosive weapons and examine frameworks for immediate and long-term health assistance to survivors and affected communities. Participants will engage in discussions aimed at

¹ 3.5 Ensure the marking, clearance, and removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war as soon as feasible after the end of active hostilities in accordance with our obligations under applicable international law, and support the provision of risk education.

4.4 Facilitate rapid, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access to those in need in situations of armed conflict in accordance with applicable international law, including International Humanitarian Law.

4.5 Provide, facilitate, or support assistance to victims - people injured, survivors, families of people killed or injured - as well as communities affected by armed conflict. Adopt a holistic, integrated, gender-sensitive, and non-discriminatory approach to such assistance, taking into account the rights of persons with disabilities, and supporting post-conflict recovery and durable solutions.

4.6 Facilitate the work of the United Nations, the ICRC, other relevant international organisations and civil society organisations aimed at protecting and assisting civilian populations and addressing the direct and indirect humanitarian impact arising from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, as appropriate.

identifying best practices, addressing obstacles, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to amplify the impact of humanitarian efforts and ensure the implementation of the Political Declaration commitments, in order to respond to the needs of civilians affected by explosive weapons.

The discussion will be structured in two sessions:

- The first session will consider the impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas on health care needs and healthcare provision, with a focus on recommendations for improvements. This session will also look into specific needs of different groups of people in relation to access to healthcare - both emergency and long-term needs?
- The second session will discuss how can states operationalize the commitments of the Political Declaration, and how can other stakeholders support implementation of these commitments? What are their perspectives on each of these commitments (3.5, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6)? What challenges do they envision in implementing them, what are (or would be) good practices in relation to these commitments?

Moderator: Anne Hery, Humanity & inclusion

11:30–12:00 Debrief and closing

Debrief from workshop moderators, with wrap up and close.

12:00–13:00 Light lunch

Gaio Restaurant, 2nd Floor.

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We welcome your feedback on the workshops, here is a link to an evaluation form:
<https://bit.ly/workshopfeedback24>