

## Statement by the European Union

### EWIPA Conference

Costa Rica, November 2025

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear participants,

On behalf of the European Union, I join others in **thanking Costa Rica** for following in the footsteps of Ireland and Norway and hosting this important conference.

**The European Union is grateful for your leadership in facilitating these vital discussions** on the devastating and long-standing humanitarian consequences arising from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

**Since the EWIPA Conference in Oslo last year, the world has not been short of conflicts.** . We continued to observe harm inflicted to civilians in notably **Gaza, Ukraine, Yemen, and Sudan**. The use of explosive weapons in attacks on healthcare, education or humanitarian aid was particularly noticeable.

**For the EU, compliance with International Humanitarian Law is a longstanding priority.** The EU recalls that full compliance with IHL remains critical for the protection of civilians affected by armed conflicts, as well as for the protection of civilian infrastructure. We call on all parties to armed conflict to respect their obligations under IHL and emphasise the necessity for accountability for violations of IHL. The EU remains committed to keeping the promotion of, and adherence to, IHL at the heart of its external action.

In that context, the EU recognises the **importance of the EWIPA Political Declaration** and the need for its meaningful implementation.

The EU focuses in particular on the **humanitarian consequences of explosive weapons in populated areas**. We are addressing this question from **several angles**.

For instance, the EU has supported a **project implemented by Humanity and Inclusion**, focusing on **addressing the key** gaps in terms of data

collection on civilian harm, exchange of information and good practices through evidence-based advocacy and promoting interaction between governments, civil society and international organisations.

The EU also provides **financial assistance to support mine action**. This includes assistance to victims, humanitarian demining and mine risk education. The EU remains amongst the largest donors for mine action in the world and intends to continue to be one.

In relation to **victims of mine accidents**, the EU pays particular attention to the **needs of persons with disabilities**, both by mainstreaming disability inclusion in our projects, but also by supporting **targeted actions** such as for instance **physical rehabilitation or provision of prosthetics for mine victims**.

Finally, **we acknowledge that consequences of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas provoke long-term effects** on the life of the civilian population. The profound and long-lasting direct and indirect consequences of EWIPA, which extend beyond immediate casualties to include the destruction of essential infrastructure (water, electricity, healthcare), environmental contamination, and the long-term presence of explosive remnants of war. These effects hinder post-conflict reconstruction and the safe return of displaced persons. **Addressing EWIPA hence require a comprehensive approach, which the EWIPA process is a good framework for.**

Thank you for your attention.