



Second International Follow-up Conference to the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA Declaration)

Outcome Statement and Recommendations for the Way Forward

Issued by Costa Rica, Ireland and Norway

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas continues to cause devastating and unacceptable humanitarian suffering. In various conflicts around the world, we see grave violations of IHL.

Ongoing conflicts demonstrate the immense toll of civilian deaths and injuries, the psychological harm, the destruction of homes, schools and infrastructure essential for survival, mass displacement, restrictions on humanitarian access, and damage to the environment and cultural heritage. These realities reaffirm the urgent moral and political imperative of the *Political Declaration on EWIPA*: to strengthen the protection of civilians against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. The meaningful and full implementation of the Declaration remains an urgent priority.

Since the adoption of the Declaration in Dublin (2022) and the first follow-up conference in Oslo (2024), endorsing States and partners have deepened their collective efforts to translate commitments into tangible change. The San José Conference marked a further milestone in this ongoing process, providing a platform to evaluate progress, share national experiences, and advance a global vision for more humane and responsible conduct in warfare.

The Inter-conference Process as Implementation in Action

The Trio of EWIPA “Champions” recognizes that the Declaration’s strength lies not only in its text, but in the continuous engagement and implementation that gives it life. Between Oslo and San José, a dynamic series of regional workshops, national consultations, and military-to-military exchanges brought together security and military officials, government experts and humanitarian practitioners, to exchange practical lessons on implementation.

These meetings formed an essential part of the Declaration’s implementation architecture, offering spaces for reflection, coordination, and innovation. They demonstrated the EWIPA Declaration is not a static pledge, but a living political and ethical process, a bridge between humanitarian principles and operational realities.



The workshops highlighted key themes:

- The value of *cross-regional dialogue* to foster common standards and mutual understanding.
- The need to integrate *civilian harm tracking and mitigation* practices into national doctrines, planning, and training.
- The importance of *data collection, transparency, and victim assistance* as pillars of accountability and credibility.
- The role of *regional ownership* and partnerships with civil society and international organizations in advancing universalization.

These inter-conference efforts, together with the San José deliberations, have promoted universalization included perspectives of different stakeholders, and encouraged policy changes.

The Declaration's goals can only be fully achieved when these broader efforts are matched by concrete, effective implementation measures at the national level. National action is essential to translate commitments into real change on the ground, ensuring that the protection of civilians is strengthened in practice.

Achievements and Progress since Oslo

Since the Oslo Conference, additional States have endorsed the Declaration, bringing the total number of endorsements to over 90. This growth demonstrates the Declaration's growing normative influence. While endorsing States have committed to developing national policies and operational guidance to reduce civilian harm, strengthen cooperation with humanitarian organizations, and promote transparency in military practice, more needs to be done at a national level that specifically addresses the harm from use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

The Trio acknowledges the important role of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), Article 36, UNIDIR, and other partners in supporting implementation and universalization efforts.

Costa Rica's hosting of the San José Conference symbolizes the growing commitment of the Global South to this agenda and reinforces the Declaration's universality.



Way Forward: Recommendations to the next international conference

The Trio reaffirms its joint commitment to guide and sustain the process until the next international follow-up conference, and encourage other endorsing states to act as regional champions. Throughout this period, we hope to see endorsing States advance the growth and implementation of Declaration. Focusing on realizing its commitments through cooperation, persistence and sustained action, we put forward the following recommendations for the upcoming period:

1. **Review and Strengthen National Policy and operational Practice:** In line with paragraph 3.1 of the Declaration, endorsing States should review, develop or improve national policies, doctrines, operational procedures and training, including the commitment in paragraph 3.3 to restrict or refrain as appropriate from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, when their use may be expected to cause harm to civilians or civilian objects. States are encouraged to complete this review and to develop/update national implementation plans before the next conference.
2. **Identify and empower National Focal Points:** National Focal Points should be identified and supported in order to promote implementation efforts, including across military and governmental institutions. Endorsing states should explore forming formal national coordination mechanisms to build collaboration and ensure appropriate military/security engagement.
3. **Improve data and monitoring of indirect and reverberating effects:** In order to better understand indirect and reverberating effects of explosive weapons use, endorsing states should increase their efforts and develop capacity on data collection and analysis to document impacts and inform operational adjustments. States are encouraged to make available practical examples and methodologies, before the next international follow-up conference.
4. **Support Exchanges of Good Practices and Lesson Sharing:** Building on paragraphs 4.1 and 4.7 of the Declaration, endorsing States should promote the exchange of detailed information on national tools, procedures, and methodologies used to implement the Declaration. Such exchanges, including technical and tactical expertise, can support other States seeking concrete examples, contribute to the UNODA online repository, and help build a menu



of adaptable approaches that strengthen collective implementation efforts, facilitate civilian protection measures and build normative momentum.

5. **Support Victim Assistance:** Enhanced supports for survivors, families, and affected communities. These should be facilitated by active engagement with affected States and interested parties to ensure the distinctive impacts of explosive weapons use are addressed in appropriately tailored ways that also ensure that assistance is inclusive, non-discriminatory, and sustainable.
 6. **Promote Universalization and Outreach:** Intensify diplomatic and public outreach, particularly towards under-represented regions and across relevant multilateral, regional and international forums. Encourage endorsing states and stakeholders to strengthen communication of the urgent need for global adherence and shared ownership of the Declaration's objectives. Facilitate a continued intersessional program of regional and thematic activities, events and informal consultations, promoting the community of practice that supports national-level implementation. Support could include the provision of financial resources, the participation of national experts, or in-kind contributions to ensure continuity and inclusiveness.
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Conclusion

The San José Conference reaffirmed that the Political Declaration on EWIPA is a political commitment, a moral and strategic compass guiding States towards more human security focused-practices with changes in practice as the best measure of progress. The Trio remains dedicated to work with other endorsing States to ensure the full realization of the Declaration's objectives to help end the suffering and long-lasting dislocation that the use of EWIPA brings.

This outcome document represents a collective commitment to strengthen the protection of civilians and address the humanitarian consequences arising from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and suggests a path forward for enhanced cooperation and action.

Together, Costa Rica, Ireland, and Norway call upon all endorsing States and partners to sustain and further advance this collective endeavor, ensuring that the protection of civilians remains at the heart of global efforts to prevent and alleviate human suffering in armed conflict.