

## **The Second International Follow-up Conference on EWIPA**

**San Jose, 19-20 November 2025**

### **General debate**

#### **Statement by Norway**

Distinguished colleagues, friends,

Full protection of civilians and the civilian objects they rely on must be made a strategic priority in the planning and conduct of military operations. We must prevent severe, cumulative, and protracted harm to civilians wherever possible.

To this end, the Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas is both a shared political commitment and a practical tool. It challenges us to examine our policies and operations, ensuring that precautions are integrated into how we plan and conduct military operations. Fully implemented, it can strengthen operational behaviour, reinforce respect for International Humanitarian Law, and most importantly, reduce civilian suffering and save lives.

Today, we face a stark reality: the use of explosive weapons in populated areas takes a heavy toll on civilians, causing immense suffering and destruction. In Gaza, the destruction of civilian infrastructure is enormous. The parties and the international community must work together on Gaza's recovery, now that a ceasefire is in place. Rebuilding will be costly and take decades. Civilians in Ukraine and Sudan have also faced widespread devastation to their homes and essential services. These situations show the devastating impact of explosive weapons in populated areas — and the importance of fully implementing EWIPA.

We must do more at every stage of the conflict cycle. The Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* provides clear guidance for future work. The best way to protect civilians is to bring conflicts to an end. When conflicts persist, they inflict cumulative harm on civilians. Strengthening civilian protection also contributes to peace and reconciliation. By limiting civilian harm, we help communities recover, rebuild trust, and lay the foundations for sustainable peace.

To conclude, EWIPA is more than words. It is a political instrument reflecting our shared ambition. When paired with commitment and action, it improves operational conduct and reduces harm.

As part of the trio of guiding states, and as host of the previous follow-up conference, Norway remains committed to advancing implementation and sharing experiences to move this initiative forward globally.

Thank you.