



**Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from  
the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive  
Weapons in Populated Areas**

**Dublin Conference, 18 November 2022**

**Statement by MAG (Mines Advisory Group)**

*(Check against delivery)*

Thank you, Chair.

Allow me to begin by congratulating Ireland for their commitment and leadership in steering this political process to where it is today. As a member of the International Network on Explosive Weapons, MAG aligns itself with the INEW statement and would like to add some remarks in our organisational capacity.

We are pleased to have contributed to the consultations on this Political Declaration, as one of the world's leading humanitarian mine action organisations, and it is a privilege to be here today in Dublin to mark its adoption. As someone who has survived bombing in my own country, the long-lasting impact of explosive weapons is all too familiar. And there is no question that when explosive weapons – especially those with wide area effects – are used in populated areas, there is an unacceptable risk to civilians. Destruction of civilian infrastructure also causes reverberating effects, immediately denying access to basic needs such as clean water, food, and electricity. In the longer term the process of restoring essential services is protracted, exacerbated by unexploded ordnance left behind. In built-up areas, clearance of unexploded ordnance becomes increasingly complex and resource intensive, prohibiting even the first steps towards recovery. MAG teams see this every day in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Ukraine, and many other countries affected by conflict.

Addressing these humanitarian consequences is the central aim of the Political Declaration. But achieving this shared goal requires more than words in this room today. Endorsing states must now implement this Political Declaration in a way that translates into concrete action and stronger protection for conflict-affected communities and encourage more states to do the same. The ultimate aim must be to stigmatise violence that causes civilian harm. The journey ahead requires an unwavering commitment to upholding International Humanitarian Law and strengthening the protection of civilians if it is to have a real and lasting impact. MAG stands ready to support this ongoing process.

Thank you, Chair.

**ENDS.**