**Communique**

**Preparatory Meeting for the Oslo Political Declaration Conference on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)**

In collaboration with the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), the IANSA Women Network Nigeria organized a one-day preparatory meeting for the Oslo political declaration conference on explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) on April 9, 2024. The objective of the meeting was to consolidate stakeholder positions in preparation for Nigeria's participation in the Oslo event in Norway.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of following stakeholders.

* **Irish Embassy in Abuja**
* **Embassy of Norway-Abuja**
* **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**
* **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs -UNOCHA**
* **Office of the National Security Adviser**
* **Members of the Civil Society Organizations and private Sectors.**

Following extensive deliberation and brainstorming, the participants arrived at the following key points.

* **Advocacy for domestication of International Humanitarian Laws**- Efforts should be made to advocate to the National Assembly for the domestication of International Humanitarian Laws in Nigeria to ensure compliance with global standards in conflict situations.
* **Diversification of National Security services-** There is a necessity to diversify national security services to cover other conflict-affected areas or regions within Nigeria to address the widespread impact of explosive weapons.
* **Drawing lessons from past conflict-** Nigeria should draw lessons from past conflicts, particularly the civil war/Biafran war, in order to effectively map and clear landmines to prevent civilian casualties and ensure safe inhabitation of affected areas.
* **Contextualization and gender mainstreaming-** The declaration on explosive weapons should be contextualized with a focus on gender mainstreaming, recognizing that women, children, the elderly, and disabled populations are disproportionately affected by the humanitarian impact of such weapons.
* **Advocacy for endorsement and enforcement-** There is a need to amplify advocacy efforts to encourage Nigeria to endorse, enforce, and raise awareness about the international declaration on explosive weapons to mitigate their adverse effects.
* **Trauma Management for Victims-** Adequate trauma management services should be provided for victims of explosive weapons and armed conflicts to address their physical and psychological needs effectively.
* **Enhanced Training for Military Personnel-** The government should prioritize enhancing the training of military personnel on the responsible use of weapons of mass destruction to minimize civilian harm and adhere to international humanitarian principles.
* **Wider Consultation and Dialogue-** There should be wider consultation, dialogue, and engagement with stakeholders from the security sector, legislature, judiciary, and civil society to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the challenges posed by explosive weapons.
* **Establishment of demilitarized zones-** Consideration should be given to establishing demilitarized zones in conflict-affected areas to protect civilian populations and vital infrastructure from the impact of explosive weapons.
* **Investment in Mine Action Programs-** Increased investment in mine action programs is essential to effectively clear explosive remnants of war and reduce the risk to civilian lives and livelihoods.
* **Risk Education and Promotion of Peace Education**- Conduct comprehensive risk education and awareness campaigns to educate communities about the dangers of explosive remnants of war and promote safe behaviors to minimize the risk of accidents and Prioritize the promotion of peace education and awareness-raising initiatives to foster a culture of non-violence and conflict resolution among communities affected by explosive weapons.
* **Community**-led initiatives- Encourage the involvement of local communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of measures to address the impact of explosive weapons, fostering ownership and sustainability.
* **Cross Border collaboration-** Promote cross-border collaboration and information-sharing with neighboring countries to address the transnational flow of explosive weapons and enhance regional security.
* **Protection of Critical Infrastructure-** Prioritize the protection of critical infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, and water facilities, from the impact of explosive weapons to ensure the continuity of essential services for affected populations.
* **Strenthening of legal frameworks-** Advocate for the strengthening of national legal frameworks to regulate the production, transfer, and use of explosive weapons, including measures to hold perpetrators of violations accountable.
* **Psychosocial Support Services-** Enhance the availability and accessibility of psychosocial support services for survivors of explosive weapons and affected communities to address trauma and promote mental well-being.
* **Integration of Environmental Considerations**- Integrate environmental considerations into the planning and implementation of responses to explosive weapons, including measures to mitigate environmental degradation and contamination caused by explosive remnants
* **Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms**- Establish robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms to document incidents involving explosive weapons, track their impact on civilians and infrastructure, and inform evidence-based decision-making and advocacy efforts.
* **Research and Innovations**- Invest in research and innovation to develop technologies and strategies for the safe clearance and disposal of explosive remnants of war, as well as the prevention of their proliferation and use.
* **Long Term Development Initiatives**- Integrate efforts to address the impact of explosive weapons into broader long-term development initiatives, promoting sustainable peacebuilding, reconciliation, and socio-economic recovery in affected areas.

The above are aimed to contribute to the promotion of peace, protection of civilians, and adherence to international humanitarian standards in conflict-affected areas within Nigeria and beyond.