

Twenty-seventh Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects

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Item 7 of the Provisional agenda

General exchanges of views

Working paper

Submitted by Italy *

1. Amended Protocol II (AP II) plays a fundamental role in ensuring respect for the rules and principles of international humanitarian law. Italy underscores the need to call for non-State Parties to accede to it, and for Parties to the original Protocol II to ratify its amended version as soon as possible. Further efforts to promote universalization through relevant regional fora should be pursued, building on successful experiences under other Conventions.
2. Regarding national reporting, given its crucial value in building trust and measuring progress in implementation, Italy calls on all Parties to take part in this highly beneficial exercise.
3. Italy regrets the repeated use of the heinous weapons addressed by APII in certain areas of conflicts. Italy attaches the highest importance to assistance and cooperation in mine action as a vital tool to prevent indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic consequences, particularly for civilians. Mine action is at the core of Italy's humanitarian assistance. To this end, a dedicated fund for humanitarian demining was established in 2001. Since its creation, approximately 100 million euros have been allocated to initiatives addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in emergency contexts, including persons with disabilities. Italy's projects adopt a holistic and integrated multi-sectoral approach, combining physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and socio-economic reintegration. In 2024 alone, we supported projects worth over 8 million euros in Afghanistan, Libya, Mali, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, and Ukraine.
4. Italy shares the deep concern of the international community of the international community over the increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including by non-State actors, and at the serious threats they pose to civilians, humanitarian workers, and peacekeeping personnel. IEDs are often used in attacks deliberately targeting civilians and are responsible for a vast number of casualties each year. Their reverberating effects include population displacement, destruction of infrastructure and cultural heritage, ongoing psychological trauma, and economic deprivation. It is crucial to closely monitor evolving trends in the acquisition of technologies and know-how used to assemble and deploy such weapons. The discussions within the Group of Experts this year have contributed to strengthening the exchange of information on the threat posed by IEDs among all relevant stakeholders and it is of paramount importance to continue these efforts within the forum.
5. Since Amended Protocol II is the only IHL instrument that explicitly addresses the use of mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM), Italy remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact and long-term consequences arising from the indiscriminate use of these weapons.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

6. The starting point in this discussion is the need to ensure that any weapon not prohibited is used in conformity with international humanitarian law. Preventing and mitigating the humanitarian consequences of MOTAPM requires restricting their use and integrating the precautionary measures reflected in Amended Protocol II and its Technical Annex into national military doctrines and planning. These measures are incorporated into the practice of the Italian Armed Forces, aimed not only at minimizing civilian harm but also at facilitating clearance operations after hostilities and enabling the return of decontaminated land to productive social and economic use.

7. This significant issue merits continued discussion within the framework of the CCW and should be added to the agenda of the CCW Annual Conference.
