

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 European Union and Albania, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine *

1. We support efforts to universalise and strengthen the CCW and stress the importance of continued compliance with all CCW provisions and annexed Protocols. In this regard, we encourage all States that have not yet done so to join Amended Protocol II. Its general provisions as well as the specific articles for different types of weapons remain highly relevant to prevent superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering and need to be complied with by all High Contracting Parties.
2. Given its direct relevance to the implementation and operation of this Protocol, we must strongly condemn Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which is not only a blatant violation of international law, including International Humanitarian Law (IHL), human rights law, and the UN Charter, but also a humanitarian catastrophe for Ukraine and its people brought about by the Russian Federation. Russia bears full responsibility for the loss of life, the human suffering and all the destruction it causes in its war of aggression in Ukraine.
3. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines that makes Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. Furthermore, Russian forces have also used victim-activated booby-traps and improvised explosive devices in Ukraine, causing civilian casualties and suffering. We call on Russia to fully comply with all obligations under International Humanitarian Law, and in particular to respect the obligations of this Protocol.
4. The EU remains firmly committed to its support to Ukraine and will continue its programmes to helping mine clearance as well as victim assistance and rehabilitation. The EU encourages all States in a position to do so to follow suit and assist Ukraine in its mine clearance efforts in accordance with article 11.3 of AP II.
5. We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing use of mines, booby-traps and other devices. This also concerns the continued severe global impact of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and their indiscriminate use and effects, in particular in the perpetration of terrorist acts and the use of IEDs by non-state actors. IEDs pose a worldwide threat, affecting over 50 countries and territories, inflict serious physical injuries, damage critical infrastructure, and spread fear and disruption across affected communities. The expanding use of IEDs against civilian populations and infrastructure, including health-care systems, produces alarming humanitarian harm, especially in urban settings. This is of increasing concern and requires an urgent response from the international community. Efforts to

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enhance prevention, preparedness and response are needed to tackle the global threat these weapons pose. Coordination on national, regional and international levels is required. Clearance of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature needs to be done in conjunction with the efforts in other disarmament conventions, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention where clear synergies exist with APII.

6. The European Union reiterates the importance of a comprehensive and coordinated global approach to addressing the threat posed by IEDs. We underline the need to actively engage the private sector, in particular producers and distributors of precursor materials, to prevent their diversion to unauthorized end users. We also stress the importance of robust national measures to restrict the supply of weapons and explosive precursors to terrorist actors. In this regard, the EU has undertaken a range of concrete actions within the framework of the European Agenda on Security and, more specifically, under the EU Action Plan against the Illicit Trafficking and Use of Firearms and Explosives, aimed at reducing the risk of misuse of explosive materials for IED production.

7. The EU has also contributed to the development of regional guidelines and best practices designed to counter the diversion and illicit use of materials for IEDs. Notably, Regulation (EU) 2019/1148 on the marketing and use of explosives precursors, together with the accompanying Guidelines for EU Member States, the chemical industry and online marketplaces, has significantly reinforced controls and improved cooperation between public authorities and the private sector. This regulation has strengthened the EU's capacity to prevent the illicit manufacture of explosives, in response to the evolving threat of terrorism and other serious criminal activities. The EU has conducted an evaluation of the Regulation, with the final report expected by February 2026, to ensure it remains effective and fit for purpose in the current security environment.

8. We encourage all partners to consider similar comprehensive measures, grounded in national legislation and international cooperation, to reduce the global risk of diversion and misuse of explosives precursors. The EU stands ready to share its experience and good practices, and to work with all States and regions seeking to enhance their own preventive capacities under the framework of the CCW Amended Protocol II.

9. As far as international cooperation and assistance are concerned, the EU will continue to support national capacity building efforts and remains actively involved around the globe to address the IED threat.

10. The EU is also fully committed to mainstreaming a gender perspective into all non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control work in line with Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council and all related resolutions, including through promoting women's full and equal participation and providing integrated support where appropriate.

11. In conclusion, we need to highlight once again the humanitarian impact and the heavy consequences on social and economic development caused by the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of Mines Other than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM). While acknowledging that MOTAPM are legitimate weapons, Parties to the Convention are obliged to ensure that they are used in accordance with IHL, including by taking all feasible precautions to protect civilians from the effects of these weapons. Further discussion is needed within the CCW framework on how to ensure greater compliance with Amended Protocol II and we regret that a few countries, including the Russian Federation decided to block such discussions in previous years. For this reason, the EU supports the adding of MOTAPM to the agenda for the CCW Annual Conference and continues to believe that expert discussions on the issue would be of overall benefit to us all.