

Meeting of the High Contracting Parties 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

24 November 2023

English only

Geneva, 15-17 November 2023

Agenda item 7

General exchange of views

Obstacles to the Implementation of the CCW: Ukraine's perspective

Submitted by Ukraine

1. Ukraine profoundly regrets that during the 25th Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II and at this Meeting, the destructive position of the Russian Federation prevents the High Contracting Parties from having substantial discussions on the implementation of this important Convention. Ukraine also notes that Russia's attempts to manipulate and misuse the rules of procedure with regard to participation of observers are nothing more than indication of Russia's tremendous fear that its numerous violations of humanitarian law, the UN Charter, as well as Russia's total disregard of its obligations under CCW and its Protocols will be once again exposed at this forum.
2. Ukraine recognizes and highly values the important role played by the CCW as a crucial international instrument to protect the civilian population against the effects of hostilities, promoting international norms, and encouraging international cooperation and assistance among the High Contracting Parties, including addressing threats of explosive remnants of war.
3. Throughout these years, meetings of the High Contracting Parties have provided an invaluable opportunity to reaffirm the Convention's vital role in the global disarmament architecture, which was blatantly undermined by the Russian Federation in particular by its ongoing aggression against Ukraine.
4. Since the start of its invasion of Ukraine's territories, the Russian Federation has been indiscriminately using different types of weapons, including those prohibited or restricted by the CCW and its Protocols and by the international humanitarian law, such as booby trap mines, improvised explosive devices, and incendiary weapons.
5. The Russian Federation has contaminated a significant part of Ukraine's territory, around 174 000 km² with mines and explosive remnants of war. Due to ongoing active hostilities, accompanied by irregularity, non-discriminate targeting and massive use of anti-personnel mines by the Russian armed forces, the scale of mine contamination continues to grow.
6. Millions of people in Ukraine are at risk of explosive weapons, which have the most devastating impact on children. The targeting of hospitals, schools, and residential areas and use of explosive weapons with wide area effects has resulted in killing and maiming of hundreds of Ukrainian children.
7. In this regard, Ukraine calls upon the international community to act in a united and decisive manner to prevent any attempts to endanger the relevant international instruments, especially CCW and its Protocols, through either aggressive policies, violation of State's sovereignty and territorial integrity or through blocking important decisions to be adopted by the State Parties during the meetings.



8. Ukraine is grateful to States, international and non-governmental organizations who provide assistance to Ukraine in mine clearance, risk education and victim assistance.
 9. Joint efforts are undertaken to clean the newly liberated territories, contaminated by the aggressor, to ensure the safety of civilians and to create conditions for sustainable development in the affected regions.
 10. Ukraine once again underlines the importance of accountability, in all its dimensions, for any violations of this Convention as well as for the damage caused by Russia during its illegal war of aggression against my country and calls upon the High Contracting Parties to the CCW and its Protocols to redouble their efforts to make Russia stop its military aggression against Ukraine in order to prevent a catastrophic increase in casualties and destruction and to make Russia return to the tenants of international law.
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