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

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English only

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Agenda item 14
Status of implementation of and compliance with the Convention and its Protocols

Compliance Annual Reports Analysis

Informal note prepared by the Implementation Support Unit

I. Introduction

1. At the Third Review Conference (2006), the High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) decided to establish a compliance mechanism, which, among other things, seeks consultation and cooperation among High Contracting Parties and national measures for implementation of the Convention. To submit their Compliance Annual Reports (CARs), High Contracting Parties use the reporting forms and the summary sheet as adopted by the Meeting of High Contracting Parties in 2007 (CCW/MSP/2007/5, Paragraph 32, Paragraph 35, Annex VI.)

2. This note was prepared by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to provide HCPs with insights into quantitative and qualitative trends concerning the submission of CARs. It includes statistical data on submissions since January 2007 and a brief analysis of the information provided by HCPs in their 2024 CARs, covering the reporting period of 2023. The analysis is based solely on publicly accessible reports.

3. The preparation of this note is grounded in the mandate of the ISU to act as a focal point for submission of information by and to the High Contracting Parties regarding the Convention and its annexed Protocols. It also aims to support the High Contracting Parties, upon request, in implementing the CCW and its Protocols. This note responds to requests from CCW officeholders in 2022 for succinct quantitative and qualitative analyses of CARs and National Annual Reports under Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, to inform High Contracting Parties during their annual meetings when considering relevant agenda items.

4. The preparation of this note was made possible by voluntary contributions received in support to the universalization, implementation and strengthening of the CCW[1]. These contributions have enabled the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to enhance its support in identifying and addressing

[1] Under the UNODA project in support of the universalization, implementation and strengthening of 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 (CCW).

gaps and challenges in the current compliance and implementation mechanisms of CCW.

II. Overall submission status since 2007

5. Since January 2007, the ISU has received a total of 833 CARs. The submission rate has remained low over the years, with an average of fewer than 50 per cent of HCPs submitting their compliance reports annually. The average annual submission rate is 38 per cent of all HCPs at any given time. The number of submissions reached its highest point in 2022, totaling 60 and representing 48 per cent of HCPs (see Figure I).

6. As per the decision on the Compliance Mechanism, HCPs are expected to submit their CARs in advance of the Meeting of the HCPs. Between 2007 and 2009, most HCPs submitted their reports in September, October, and November, aligning with the timing of the annual meeting. However, in 2010, the Fourth CCW Review Conference established 31 March as the annual deadline for submitting compliance reports. Since then, HCPs have shifted to submitting their reports in March of each year, departing from the previous pattern (see Figure II). Despite the deadline, the ISU continues to receive reports throughout the year, reflecting the ongoing efforts of HCPs to fulfill their obligations even after the official submission date.

Figure II: Compliance Annual Report Submissions by Month Since 2007

7. Of the 833 reports received, 602 were submitted in English, 109 in Spanish, 49 in Russian, 40 in French, 18 in Arabic and 15 in Chinese (see Figure III).

Figure III: Languages of the Compliance Annual Reports

8. HCPs can be categorized into four groups based on their CARs submission rate since the year they became parties to the Convention. The four groups consist of: HCPs with a zero per cent submission rate; HCPs with a submission rate lower than 50 per cent; HCPs with a submission rate of 50 per cent and above; and HCPs with a 100 per cent submission rate (see Figure IV.)

9. Out of 126 HCPs, forty have never submitted their CARs. The regional distribution[2] of these HCPs is as follows: nineteen HCPs from Africa, eleven from Asia, eight from the Americas, one from Europe, and one from Oceania. Twenty-six of these HCPs became parties to the CCW before the establishment of the compliance mechanism in 2007.

10. There are thirty-four HCPs with a submission rate below 50 per cent. The regional distribution within this group is as follows: six HCPs from Africa; nine from the Americas; eleven from Asia; and eight from Europe. Among these HCPs, twenty-six became parties to the CCW before 2007. The submission rate within this group varies significantly. The highest submission rate within this group is 44 per cent, with eight actual submissions[3] out of eighteen possible submissions,[4] while the lowest submission rate is five per cent, with only one actual submission out of eighteen possible.

11. There are forty-nine HCPs with a submission rate of 50 per cent or higher. This group includes: eight HCPs from the Americas, eight HCPs from Asia, thirty HCPs from Europe, two HCPs from Oceania and one from Africa. Forty-seven became parties to the CCW before 2007. Within this group, the highest submission rate is 94 per cent, with seventeen actual submissions out of eighteen possible submissions. The lowest submission rate is 58 per cent, with ten actual submissions out of eighteen possible.

12. Three HCPs from Europe have maintained a 100 per cent submission rate for their CARs. These HCPS have consistently submitted their reports every year since they became parties to the CCW, all of which occurred before 2007.

Figure IV: Compliance Annual Reports submission rate since 2007

[2] This report follows the UN geographical regions as defined by the UN Statistics Division.
[3] Actual submission´ refers to the number of reports submitted.
[4] Possible submission´ refers to the number of reports that could have been submitted since 2007 when the compliance mechanism was established.

III. Submission status in 2024

13. As of 31 August 2024, the ISU had received 55 CARs for the reporting year 2023. Seventy-one HCPs had yet to submit their reports (See Figure V.)

14. Out of the 55 CARs submitted to ISU, 32 reports were from HCPs in Europe, 12 from HCPs in Asia, one from an HCP in Oceania, seven from HCPs in the Americas and three from HCPs in Africa. The number of overall submissions remains unchanged compared to the previous year. Out of the 55 submissions, 30 were submitted by 31 March. Five of the reports submitted are not available publicly, as per the indication of the HCPs. One HCPs submitted their reports for the first time.

15. Regarding the language of submissions, 36 reports were submitted in English, seven in Spanish, three in Russian, five in French, one in Chinese and three in Arabic.

16. Of the 55 HCPs that submitted their reports, 49 designated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and/or Ministry of Defence as national contact points. Other entities designated as national contact points were, for example, the Ministry of Interior, Prime Minister's Office and National Centres for Demining. Three HCP did not indicate information on the designated national contact point.

Figure V. Comparative Compliance Annual Reports submission

IV. Overview of information in reports submitted in 2024

17. The CARs forms request information from HCPs on: dissemination of information on the Convention and its annexed Protocols to their armed forces and to the civilian population (form A); steps taken to meet the relevant technical requirements of the Convention and its annexed Protocols and any other relevant information pertaining thereto (form B); legislation related to the Convention and its annexed Protocols (form C); Measures taken on technical cooperation and assistance (form D); and other relevant matters (form E). The paragraphs below summarize information received under each form.

Form A: Dissemination of information

18. Forty nine out of 55 HCPs have indicated no change in this section compared to the previous year. The HCPs reported that their military and marine training courses include information on the provisions of the CCW and its Protocols. Some HCPs have also incorporated humanitarian demining in their curricula. One HCP did not provide any information.

19. Some HCPs reported that the dissemination of information to non-military audiences was conducted through mine risk education. Such activities were normally coordinated by national mine action authorities while also involving various entities including international organizations and non-governmental organizations. Mine risk education projects included marking as well as placing warning signs. Some HCPs reported that a gender approach is used during the dissemination activities to the civilian population.

Form B: Technical requirements and relevant information

20. Various HCPs reported conducting training on unexploded and water explosive remnants of war. The remaining HCPs did not provide any new information on this subject. Additionally, one HCP did not submit any information.

Form C: Legislation

21. Out of the total HCPs submissions, 44 reported no changes in the information provided in previous submissions. Some HCPs indicated the adoption of new national mine action programmes. A few HCP reported the implementation of a new administrative order that encompasses the regulation of specific civilian explosives, the establishment of national control lists of dual-use items, and the adoption of national mine action standards. Additionally, two HCP did not provide any updates.

Form D: Technical cooperation and assistance

22. Several HCPs reported activities on their technical cooperation and assistance conducted in 2023. These activities included the provision of experts and the delivery of training courses to support other HCPs. Additionally, HCPs supplied demining equipment and financial support on a bilateral basis. HCPs also detailed their financial contributions and the deployment of experts to international missions and related international organizations. Furthermore, they engaged in various technical exercises, dialogues, and exchanges of information at both technical and policy levels. One HCP did not provide any updates.

Form E: Other relevant matters

23. Numerous HCPs included additional information on various related matters. This included data on the destruction of unexploded ordnance, clearance of contaminated areas and land release process. They also reported on the destruction of explosive ordnance. Furthermore, these HCPs highlighted their contributions to UN-established groups such as the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and the CCW HCPs Annual Meeting. They also provided insights into their research and development efforts focused on new clearance methods and technology.