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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Geneva, 13-15 November 2024
Agenda item 7
General exchange of views

Working Paper*

Submitted by Albania, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, the Principality of Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the European Union

1. We continue to remain gravely concerned about reports of Russia's failure to comply with its obligations under the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols during the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. We stand united in condemning all violations of international law. In this context, it is important to recall and emphasize the responsibility of all CCW High Contracting Parties to fully implement their obligations under the Convention and its Protocols.

2. Over six million people in Ukraine continue to be at risk due to Russia's use of dangerous explosive devices – including mines, inter alia those of an improvised nature, IEDs and booby-traps - inflicting casualties, terrorizing the population and restricting the free movement of people. At least 1,071 Ukrainian civilians have fallen victim to mines and detonation of explosive remnants of weapons resulting in the death of 313 people and injury of near 800, including 100 children. More than one third of Ukraine's territory and territorial sea, needs to be surveyed for explosive hazards. Deminers have already discovered over 874,000 explosive objects. We are alarmed by reports that Russia's forces are using drones to airdrop deadly PFM-1 anti-personnel mines in areas densely populated by civilians. These and other actions only intensify civilian suffering caused by Russia`s repeated attacks, which have destroyed hospitals and medical facilities, schools, energy infrastructure and water supply systems.

3. We demand that Russia immediately take all appropriate steps to prevent and suppress violations of the CCW and its Protocols and to end its illegal invasion of Ukraine, in accordance with its obligations under international law.

4. We recognize the indispensable role of the international community, including States and organizations that are dedicated to helping clear territories contaminated as a result of Russia's use of mines and explosive ordnance against Ukraine, as well as supporting victims and raising awareness among the civilian population. The scale of contamination in Ukraine

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has inevitably placed additional pressures on global demining efforts, and we recognize progress needs to be made to clear all contaminated states. Nonetheless, the scale of contamination in Ukraine also has implications that extend beyond Ukraine, impacting both global food security and the global economy. Our efforts in mine clearance saves lives and enables communities to rebuild safely, while humanitarian assistance brings essential care and relief to those affected. We thank all those involved for their unwavering support and commitment to a peaceful and just future for Ukraine.

5. Our shared commitment to upholding international law, protecting civilians, and preserving the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity is resolute. We reiterate our strong support for Ukraine and our commitment to hold Russia to account for any violations of the CCW and its Protocols, international law and the United Nations Charter.