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

14 November 2024

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Geneva, 13-15 November 2024
Agenda item 14
Status of implementation of and compliance with the Convention and its Protocols

Situation with regard to Compliance with the Norms and Principles of International Humanitarian Law during the Special Military Operation in Ukraine*

Submitted by the Russian Federation

1. Throughout the special military operation (SMO) in Ukraine, we continue to record numerous violations of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law (IHL) by the Kiev regime.

2. The facts of everyday shelling of the Russian territory with the aim to cause severe damage to civilian infrastructure and civilians require proper response from the world community. For these purposes, Kiev deliberately employs inhumane weapons (mines, booby-traps, explosive objects) against the civilian population, mining roadsides between populated areas, bridges, dams, residential buildings, educational and medical facilities.

3. We regularly register cases of mass and indiscriminate mining by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) of urban and rural areas with PFM-1 “Lepestok” anti-personnel mines. Within the two years since the beginning of the SMO, 167 cases of civilians being blown up on PFM-1 mines have been registered in the Donetsk People’s Republic alone. We also note the use of rockets carrying PFM-1 mines against territories adjacent to SMO zone. For instance, on 29 September 2024, 18 Lepestok anti-personnel mines were located and destroyed in the settlement of Krasny Oktyabr, Belgorod District of the Belgorod Oblast (Region). On 13 October 2024, 9 PFM-1 mines were located and destroyed in the city of Shebekino, Shebekino City District.

4. Such mines have no self-destruct and self-deactivation features and are hardly visible because of their small size and camouflage colours of the casing. The detonator goes off from a light short pressure and while an adult would lose a limb in an explosion and be disabled for life, for children it can be fatal.

5. Furthermore, Kiev widely uses PMN-2 anti-personnel blast mines and MON-50 and PVP-50 anti-personnel directional fragmentation mines to mine socially important facilities (schools, hospitals, nursery schools).

6. Ukraine’s actions constitute direct violation of the provisions of the Amended Protocol II (AP-2) to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), in particular, of Article 3 and Technical Annex to AP-2 (prohibits the use of anti-personnel mines without self-destruction and self-deactivation mechanism), as well as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention; upon its accession to the Convention in 2010, Kiev was to destroy all its stockpiles of anti-personnel mines with the exception of the minimum number needed to develop mine detection methods and train

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specialists). The practice shows that Kiev "destroyed" its anti-personnel mines only on paper, which was actually confirmed in 2023 by the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention, who gave Ukraine additional time to fulfill its obligations under the Convention.

7. We take note of the extensive use by Kiev of MLRS with rockets carrying PTM-1 and PTM-3 anti-tank mines in settlements.

8. It is also known that the AFU install industrially produced booby-traps prohibited for use by the Article 2 of the AP-2 CCW, which are practically indistinguishable from civilian devices (such as mobile phones, bags, children's toys). Booby-traps are detonated upon attempt to lift them or are activated remotely.

9. The wide use by the Kiev regime of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to mine highways and railroad tracks raises particular concern. IEDs are set off when automotive or railroad transport passes above them, or upon attempt to move them (e.g. lift them). IEDs are known to pose great danger to civilians due to the difficulty related to their detection and elimination, as well as the unpredictable consequences of the use of this type of munition.

10. The AFU continue to actively use German-made AT-2 mines. The munition's magnetic sensor reacts to metal objects, even the smallest ones. AT-2 can be activated both by a passing car and by a button on the clothes of a passer-by. Any attempt to move the mine triggers its detonation.

11. US-made M70(73) mines used by the AFU to shell public roads as well as M18A1 Claymore anti-personnel fragmentation mines employed by the AFU against civilian facilities are yet another danger for the civilian population.

12. We register the use of NATO bell-shaped cluster munitions without self-destruction mechanism such as M46, M42, M77 against the civilian population (in particular, in the Regions of Belgorod and Kursk) as well as near to the works and installations containing dangerous forces. On 28 August 2024, five kilometres off the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant, a submunition of a shot-down HIMARS MLRS cluster munition containing 180 M42/46 warheads was discovered and later destroyed.

13. The use of the above-mentioned mines constitutes a direct violation of AP-2 CCW as well as 1977 Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

14. The expanding military supplies means an ever deeper involvement of the Western countries in the hostilities and war crimes, fuel escalation of the conflict and delay its resolution.

15. Unlike the Kiev regime, the Russian Federation stands fully committed to IHL norms and principles, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Protocols, as well as the CCW and its protocols. Since the very beginning of the SMO, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation have been operating in accordance with the Manual on International Humanitarian Law for the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation developed in line with treaties related to IHL to which the Russian Federation is a party. For example, the Manual defines basic requirements for the use of anti-personnel mines in accordance with the AP-2 CCW provisions.

16. During scheduled combat training exercises, the Russian Armed Forces personnel is briefed on IHL norms and principles, including the provisions and technical requirements of AP-2. Commanders of all ranks in the special operation zone have been acquainted with these norms and in fact monitor Russian servicemen's compliance with them.

17. In order to stabilize the socio-economic situation in mine-infested regions as soon as possible, Russia regularly takes necessary measures to prevent casualties and injuries in the zone of SMO. Since the launch of the demining operations, engineering units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation have cleared more than 66 thousand hectares of terrain, discovered and destroyed more than 1,300 thousand explosive hazards, including about 20 thousand Lepestok-type mines. On a daily basis, mine clearance teams primarily check socially important facilities (hospitals, kindergartens, schools, as well as power, water and gas supply facilities, etc.), residential areas, industrial enterprises, rural areas, infrastructure facilities, areas reserved for the construction of new facilities, roads, bridges, etc.

18. In the recent years, the Russian Federation has disposed of more than 11 million anti-personnel mines that reached the end of their service life. The results of the national demining efforts are been regularly reflected by the Russian Federation in CCW, AP-2 and Protocol V national reports.

19. We constantly register requests for medical assistance from civilians in the liberated territories who get injured in explosions of prohibited PFM-1 mines and remotely-delivered anti-personnel mines of foreign origin.

20. We pay particular attention to raising awareness about the danger of mines among the local population, especially children. Specialists of engineer units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation give classes on the basics of life safety at schools on the subject of actions to be taken when explosive objects are detected in residential streets and open areas. Emphasis is placed on the dangers posed by foreign-made booby-traps and cluster munitions.

21. Russian law enforcement agencies continue to investigate and carefully document all facts of shelling of Russian regions by Ukrainian militants. Violations of IHL norms and principles, as well as CCW and Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention provisions by the Kiev regime with the connivance of Western states require an immediate response from the entire international community and bringing perpetrators to justice. Russia will continue to push for the necessary measures to be taken. Disregard of this problem leads to further degradation of the international law system in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the security situation in Europe and international stability in general.