

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 7

General exchange of views

Working Paper*

Submitted by the Republic of Bulgaria

1. It is deplorable that, yet again, the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties convenes in a highly volatile global security situation where the increased use of anti-personnel mines, improvised explosive devices and other types of munitions during the ongoing armed conflicts, including in Ukraine, the Middle East and Sudan, continues to cause loss of innocent civilian lives, destruction of civilian infrastructure and severe environmental damages.

2. It is in this same vein that Bulgaria strongly condemns Russia's unjustified, unprovoked and illegal military aggression against Ukraine and call upon it to end this war of choice where cluster munitions, anti-personnel mines and other explosive weapons, such as rockets, artillery shells and improvised explosive devices, are in use by the Russian Armed Forces. The Russian Federation must abide by its international commitments, including those emanating from International Humanitarian Law, and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from the Ukrainian territory within its internationally recognized borders.

3. In 2024, the role the Convention and its Protocols in preventing the use of specific types of conventional weapons that are considered to cause superfluous injuries and unnecessary suffering to combatants and/or to affect civilians indiscriminately is more important than ever. Bulgaria remains committed to the efforts towards strengthening the implementation and enhancing the relevance and the universalization of the CCW as a key IHL instrument. Given the full implementation of the Convention can be ensured only through compliance with its provisions by all, Bulgaria calls on those states that are not yet parties to the CCW to ratify or accede to the Convention and its protocols without any delay.

Bulgaria also continues to stress the importance of submission of annual compliance reports by all High Contracting Parties which is essential for transparency, confidence-building and facilitating international cooperation – all of them being measures to enhance implementation of and compliance with the Convention and its Protocols. Bulgaria commends the tireless work of the UNODA Geneva Branch towards keeping the CCW operational against the backdrop of the uneasy financial situation of the Convention.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



4. Bulgaria continues its support to the CCW as the right forum to address the issue of emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems and welcomes the progress made so far by the GGE LAWS. Bulgaria remains committed and will continue to promote the “two-tier” approach, whereby autonomous weapons systems not in compliance with international humanitarian law would be prohibited and other systems would be regulated to ensure their compliance with the provisions of IHL.
