

Seventeenth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War 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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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Review of the status and operation of the Protocol

Efforts undertaken regarding universalization: conclusions and recommendations

Submitted by the President of the 17th Annual Conference

1. This working paper summarizes the efforts undertaken by the President of the 17th Annual Conference of Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), Ambassador Gordan Markotić of Croatia, in his capacity of President-designate, regarding universalization.
2. This working paper covers the period from early 2023 to the 17th Annual Conference of Protocol V (13 November 2023).

I. Conclusions

3. As President-designate, the President of the 17th Annual Conference undertook specific efforts regarding universalization. He met with 14 High Contracting Parties (HCP) to the CCW, which have not yet acceded to Protocol V: Bolivia, Colombia, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Monaco, Mongolia, Niger, Serbia, Togo, Türkiye and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
4. As President-designate, the President of the 17th Annual Conference participated remotely in the workshop on CCW universalization organized in the framework of the EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 of 21 September 2021, in Addis Ababa, on 13 June 2023, which gathered Southern and Eastern Africa States. He presented the main dispositions of Protocol V, as well as the work and responsibility of the President-designate. He particularly addressed and invited four HCP to the CCW from Southern and Eastern Africa States, which have not yet acceded to Protocol V to do so: Djibouti, Malawi, Seychelles and Uganda.
5. Drawing conclusions from the discussions held, the President of the 17th Annual Conference suggests that these HCP to the CCW, in regard to their stance on Protocol V, can be categorized into four groups:
 - (a) Countries that are already in the process of accession;
 - (b) Countries with substantial reservations about their accession due to internal, political, or regional concerns identified in their national assessment of Protocol V. Consequently, their accession is presently not feasible;
 - (c) Countries that believe their existing membership in the Amended Protocol II of the CCW, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), and/or the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) renders their accession to Protocol V unnecessary and not a valuable addition to their anti-mine policy;



(d) Countries that, due to their status as microstates or their limited capacity within their Foreign Affairs departments, currently lack the ability to actively advance the accession process or prioritize it within their governments.

II. Recommendations

6. The President 17th Annual Conference recommends that HCP to the CCW, which have acceded to Protocol V, consider to promote universalization through bilateral, regional and multilateral outreach activities. This can be achieved by:

- (a) Hosting regional workshops to foster discussions and cooperation;
- (b) Strengthening partnerships and collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote universalization effectively;
- (c) Promoting outreach activities in both capitals and multilateral fora to ensure comprehensive engagement and awareness.

7. The President of the 17th Annual Conference also recommends to his or her successor and to the CCW Implementation Support Unit (ISU) the following:

- (a) Following-up with countries that already have an accession procedure underway or have indicated during meetings that they intend to start the process to accede to Protocol V soon;
 - (b) Following up with the HCP to the CCW who have not yet acceded to Protocol V, in particular with those the President of the 17th Annual Conference noted a lack of response from;
 - (c) Engaging with countries that showed no strong objection to accession or considered that Protocol V is not a priority for them currently;
 - (d) Offering all countries that are not yet parties to the Protocol V the pre-accession support of the CCW ISU and consider offering or guaranteeing possible post-accession support to those countries who lack capacities;
 - (e) Offering legal and technical explanations about the added-value benefits of ratifying Protocol V and about the differences between membership in Protocol V and the Amended Protocol II of the CCW, the APMBC, and/or the CCM.
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