

**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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**An Accelerated Plan of Action on
universalization of the Convention
and its annexed Protocols**

Promoting universality of the Convention and its Protocols

Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit

Introduction

1. With 116 High Contracting Parties, universalization remains a priority under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). For this reason the 2011 Fourth Review Conference agreed to “An Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols”.¹ The Accelerated Plan of Action on universalization called for this to continue to be a priority issue and in particular for efforts to be focused on signatory States, affected States and those regions with low levels of adherence to the CCW; urged High Contracting Parties to promote universalization through their bilateral contracts; the United Nations, CCW Implementation Support Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross and other organisations to promote universalization; the CCW Implementation Support Unit to explore all opportunities for promoting universalization and to support High Contracting Parties in this work; and to establish universalization as a standing agenda item of the annual CCW Meetings of High Contracting Parties.² The 2012 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties, Fourteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II and Sixth Conference of Protocol V, tasked this year’s Presidents-designate to promote universalization.³ This report is in response to the request for “the CCW Implementation Support Unit to continue to report annually to the

¹ ‘An Accelerated Plan of Action on universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols’ – Annex 1, final declaration, final document of the Fourth Review Conference, CCW/CONF.IV/4/Add.1, page 11.

² *Ibid.*

³ See final document of the 2012 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the Convention (CCW/MSP/2012/9), paragraph 29; final document of the Sixth Conference of Protocol V (CCW/P.V/CONF/2012/10), paragraph 27; and final document of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II (CCW/AP.II/CONF.14/6), paragraph 31.

Meeting of the High Contracting Parties on the efforts undertaken towards and progress made on universalization”.⁴

Progress on universalization

2. Since the 2012 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties, Kuwait has acceded to the CCW and consented to be bound to Protocols I, IV, V, Amended Protocol II and the amendment to Article 1. This took place on 24 May 2013. Cuba consented to be bound to Protocols IV and V on 14 November 2012.

Actions to promote universalization

3. Messages have been sent from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to all States not yet party to the CCW. The United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, and the Director of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Virginia Gamba, have both raised CCW universalization during their various bilateral meetings with States. Also, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, has communicated directly with States on joining the CCW and its Protocols.

4. The Presidents-designate of the 2013 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties, Ambassador Jean-Hugues Simon-Michel of France, Fifteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II, Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Seventh Conference of Protocol V, Ambassador Jan Knutsson of Sweden, have sent joint messages to all States not yet party urging them to join the CCW.

5. France as President-designate of this year's CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties has carried out intensive consultations with States that are not yet party to the CCW to encourage them to join the Convention. France has made representations in both capitals (demarches in forty-eight capitals) and in Geneva (by meeting up to thirty-one missions in Geneva) on universalization. Follow-up meetings have then been carried out on this topic. It has also coordinated with the CCW Implementation Support Unit on a priority list of States for universalization.

6. Ecuador as President-designate of this year's Fifteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II and responsibility for the operation and status for Amended Protocol II, has met with those High Contracting Parties that are party to original Protocol II and have not yet joined Amended Protocol II.

7. Sweden as President-designate of this year's Seventh Conference of Protocol V has made representations in capitals and in Geneva to encourage States to join both the CCW and in particular Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War.

8. The International Committee of the Red Cross continues to support universalization of the CCW and its Protocols by including this issue in its regional meetings and bilateral discussions with governments and regional seminars on international humanitarian law.

9. The Protocol V Coordinator on Clearance and Article 4, Mr. Ivan Grinevich, along with the CCW Implementation Support Unit held a briefing for those attending the United Nations Mine Action Directors Meeting who also attended the Protocol V special session on clearance. It was an opportunity to brief a group of participants that normally do not attend CCW meetings on the benefits of joining the Convention and in particular

⁴ *Final declaration, Final document of the Fourth Review Conference, CCW/CONF.IV/4/Add.1, paragraph 9, page 11.*

Protocol V. The participants had a number of questions. For example, Mozambique asked about the transmission of information on the use of explosive ordnance under Article 4 of Protocol V, Tajikistan questioned the potential for synergies between the CCW and the Convention on Anti-personnel Mines and Convention on Cluster Munitions, and Zambia asked for an individual briefing on joining the CCW.

The CCW sponsorship programme's actions on universalization

10. During the 2012 CCW conferences and this year's Amended Protocol II and Protocol V Meetings of Experts, the sponsorship programme has made possible the attendance of the following States not yet party to the Convention: Armenia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Lesotho, Nigeria, Uganda and Yemen. During the Meetings of Experts, the sponsorship programme held a briefing session on universalization and asked each participant about the prospects of their country joining the CCW. This was followed-up by the Coordinator of the Steering Committee for the sponsorship programme, Mr. Arturas Galiunas, writing to the sponsored delegates to ask about their progress towards joining the CCW. Also, Mr. Galiunas has followed up individually with potential candidates for universalization and shared the results of this work with the CCW Implementation Support Unit. The Steering Committee held a brainstorming session on CCW universalization and as a result tasked the Implementation Support Unit to produce a booklet on universalization. This task has been completed and the booklet will be published in 2014.

The CCW Implementation Support Unit's actions on universalization

11. During 2013, the CCW Implementation Support Unit has focused on supporting the efforts of the officeholders to promote universalization. This included drafting and facilitating the sending of official messages from the officeholders, providing background papers and briefs on joining the CCW and where necessary organising bilateral meetings. The Implementation Support Unit has followed up with individual States and regional groups to explain the background to and procedures for joining the CCW. This included attending a regional seminar of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries in Manila, the Philippines, during August 2013; drafting and facilitating the messages of the United Nations Secretary-General; briefing visiting delegations to the United Nations Office at Geneva; providing detailed briefs to States not yet party to the CCW; following up with all Pacific Island countries which have not yet joined the CCW; and coordinating with the Office of Legal Affairs and other United Nations departments on the process of drafting and submitting instruments of accession. An ongoing issue is the submission of instruments of accession that do not clearly set out which Protocols a State wishes to be bound by. The Implementation Support Unit has tried to more clearly address this matter in its universalization materials and is always available to assist States on such matters.

Annex

[English only]

Numbers of High Contracting Parties to the CCW and its Protocols

