

# 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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Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**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. The 2011 Fourth Review Conference agreed to “An Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols”. The Plan of Action called for a number of actions in support of universalization, including urging High Contracting Parties to promote universalization through their bilateral contacts; 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 item of the annual CCW Meetings of High Contracting Parties.<sup>1</sup> The 2013 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties, Fifteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II and the Seventh Conference of Protocol V, tasked this year’s Presidents-designate to promote universalization.<sup>2</sup> This report is in response to “the CCW Implementation Support Unit to continue to report annually to the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties on the efforts undertaken towards and progress made on universalization”.<sup>3</sup>

2. Currently there are 117 High Contracting Parties to the CCW; 79 to Amended Article 1 of the CCW; 112 to Protocol I on non-detectable fragments; 100 to Amended

<sup>1</sup> An Accelerated Plan of Action on universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols, annex I, final declaration, final document of the Fourth Review Conference, CCW/CONF.IV/4/Add.1.

<sup>2</sup> See Final report of the 2013 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties (CCW/MSP/2013/10), paragraph 24; Final document of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II High Contracting Parties (CCW/AP.II/CONF.15/8), paragraph 15; and Final document of the Seventh Conference of Protocol V High Contracting Parties, paragraph 25.

<sup>3</sup> An Accelerated Plan of Action on universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols, annex I, final declaration, final document of the Fourth Review Conference, CCW/CONF.IV/4/Add.1.

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Protocol II on mines, booby-traps and other devices; 108 to Protocol III on incendiary weapons; 102 to Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons; and 84 to Protocol V on explosive remnants of war.

#### **Actions to promote universalization**

3. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has sent messages to all States not yet party to the CCW. Those messages emphasised that the CCW's "prohibitions and regulations to protect both civilians and combatants from conventional weapons can be truly strengthened through the universal adherence of the CCW and its Protocols."
4. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, continues to promote the CCW and its Protocols. The High Representative has initiated work on those States that have not yet joined a conventional weapons treaty. The States within this group are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, Tonga and Viet Nam.
5. The Acting Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Michael Møller, has encouraged States not yet party to join the CCW during his bilateral meetings.
6. The Presidents-designate of the 2014 CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties, Mr. Remigiusz A. Henczel, Ambassador of Poland, Sixteenth Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II, Ms. Päivi Kairamo, Ambassador of Finland, and Eighth Conference of Protocol V, Ms. Katerina Sequensova, Ambassador of the Czech Republic, have sent joint messages to all States not yet party urging them to join the CCW.
7. Poland as President-designate of the CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties has followed up with States not yet party to the Convention and especially those that are close to joining. Poland will address the First Committee on the matter of CCW universalization.
8. Finland as President-designate of Amended Protocol II approached in Geneva eleven High Contracting Parties that are party to original Protocol II and have not yet joined Amended Protocol II and followed-up with letters to two of these States. Finland also carried out demarches in six capitals of States not yet party to the CCW from Africa and the Middle East.
9. The Czech Republic as President-designate of Protocol V carried out demarches in ten capitals. Those States being demarched included States not yet party to the CCW and CCW High Contracting Parties that have not yet joined Protocol V. The Czech Republic also followed-up with these States in Geneva and provided detailed feedback to the Implementation Support Unit. The States demarched were from Africa, Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East.
10. All three Presidents-designate regularly met with the Implementation Support Unit to discuss priority countries and to share the results of their consultations and demarches. On 18 September 2014 the Presidents-designates with the support of the Implementation Support Unit will host a seminar in Geneva on joining the CCW and the regime's current work.
11. France as the Chair of the 2014 Meeting of Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) held consultations with the African and ASEAN regional groups. While these meetings were mainly focused on briefing States on LAWS, it was emphasized that the CCW is a forum where new issues continue to be addressed and only by being a party to the Convention could States influence the outcome of this work. France also briefed the 2014 Disarmament Fellows on LAWS and that again provided an opportunity to press States not yet party to join the CCW.

12. The CCW Sponsorship Programme financed the attendance to the annual conferences in 2013 of the following States not yet party to the CCW: Algeria, Ghana and South Sudan. The attendance to the 2014 Amended Protocol II and Protocol V Meetings of Experts was financed for the following States not yet party to the CCW: Lebanon, Mozambique, Nigeria and Viet Nam. Also, Cambodia and Jordan were sponsored to attend the meetings of experts and both of these States are not yet party to Protocol V. The sponsored delegates attended a lunchtime briefing and this included an explanation on how to join the CCW and the benefits of doing so.

13. 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. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has followed up with Pacific Island countries on CCW universalization.

14. The Implementation Support Unit's work on universalization included drafting and facilitating the messages of the Secretary-General, drafting and sending messages to States not yet party from the 2014 Presidents-designate, drafting briefs on universalization, when necessary organizing bilateral meetings for the officeholders, providing advice on joining the CCW and its Protocols, briefing visiting delegations and groups to the United Nations Office at Geneva and completing work on a publication that explains the background and how to join the CCW. The Implementation Support Unit followed up with individual States to press them on their progress towards joining the CCW. The Implementation Support Unit has consulted with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. It has also worked with CCW High Contracting Parties in this region to determine which States not yet party are priority targets for universalization.

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