

**Fifth Review Conference 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 11 of the provisional agenda

**Review of the scope and operation**

**of the Convention and its annexed protocols**

**Promoting universality of the Convention and its Protocols**

**Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit**

**I. Introduction**

1. With 123 High Contracting Parties, universalization is a priority issue for the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). In recognition of this, at the Fourth Review Conference High Contracting Parties agreed to "An Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization of the Convention and its annexed Protocols".<sup>1</sup> The Accelerated Plan of Action called for actions in support of universalization, such as 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. This report is in response to the call for, "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>2</sup> To assist High Contracting Parties in preparing for the Fifth Review Conference, this report reflects the work undertaken on universalization of the CCW and its Protocols since the Fourth Review Conference. An update on activities carried out in 2016 will be provided during the Fifth Review Conference.

2. Since January 2012, the following States have joined instruments of the CCW:

**2012:**

<sup>1</sup> Final Document of the Fourth Review Conference, Part II, Final Declaration, Annex I, CCW/CONF.IV/4/Add.1

<sup>2</sup> Action 9 of the Accelerated Plan of Action.



Burundi: CCW, Protocols II and V

Cuba: Protocol IV and V

Lao People's Democratic Republic: Protocol V

South Africa: Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention and Protocol V

Turkmenistan: Protocol V

**2013:**

Bangladesh: Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention and Protocol V

Kuwait: CCW; Protocols I, III, IV and V; Amended Protocol II and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

Zambia: CCW; Protocols I, II, III, V; Amended Protocol II and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

**2014:**

Greece: Protocol V

Grenada: CCW; Protocols I, III, IV, V; Amended Protocol II and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

Iraq: CCW; Protocols I, II, III, IV, V; Amended Protocol II and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

**2015:**

Algeria: CCW, Protocols I, III, IV and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

State of Palestine: CCW, Protocols I and III

**2016:**

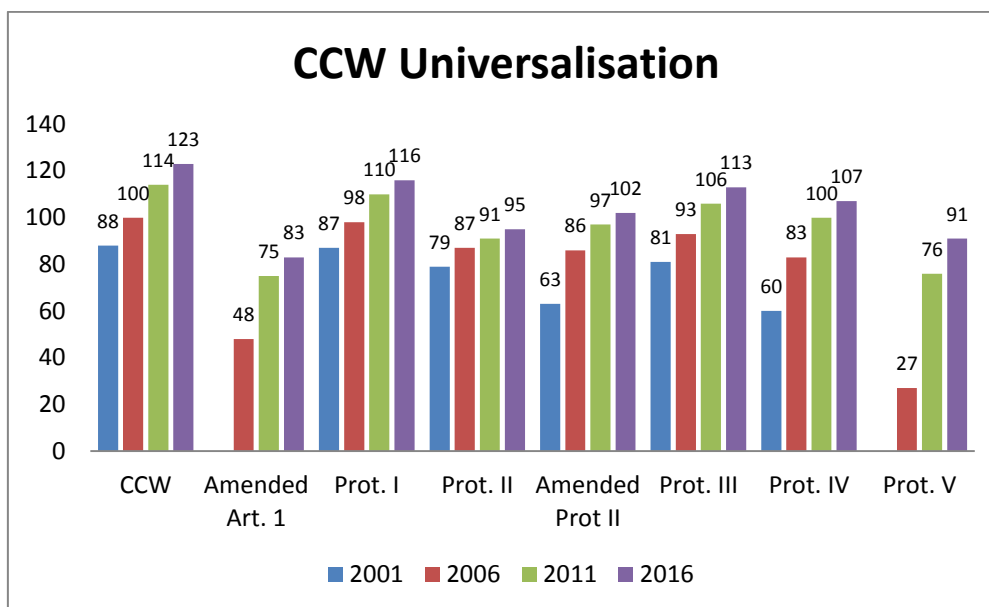
Bahrain: CCW, Protocols III, IV and V

Côte d'Ivoire: CCW, Protocols II and V

Lesotho: Protocols IV, V and the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention

Montenegro: Protocol V

The following bar graph shows the progress made on universalization from the time of the Second Review Conference in 2001 to October 2016.



## II. Actions carried out on universalization from 2012 to 2015

3. Universalization of the CCW has been raised at the highest levels of the United Nations in accordance with Actions 7 and 5 of the Accelerated Action Plan on Universalization. These call for the United Nations Secretary General and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to promote universalization of the CCW. From 2012 to 2014, the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, and the former High Representative of Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, the current High Representative, Mr. Kim Won-soo, as well as other senior officials in the UNODA have urged States not yet party to the CCW to join. The former Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, and the current Director-General, Mr. Michael Møller, have also raised CCW universalization in their respective bilateral meetings. During the United Nations' annual "Treaty Event", an event held in the margins of the General Assembly in order to encourage States to sign and accede to multilateral treaties, the CCW and its Protocols are included.

4. During the past review cycle, the annual Meetings of High Contracting Parties to the CCW, and conferences of Amended Protocol II and Protocol V have tasked the officeholders to "exercise their authority to achieve the goal of universality". The officeholders have actively promoted the CCW and its Protocols. Proving to be one of the most effective avenues for following up on universalization. The officeholders of the CCW, Amended Protocol II and Protocol V have sent joint messages to non-States Parties every year urging them to join the Convention and its Protocols. Individual officeholders have carried out demarches in capitals. As seen in 2013, when France as Chair of the CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties carried out demarches in 48 capitals.

5. Successive Chairs of the Meetings of High Contracting Parties have carried out a range of initiatives on universalization. In 2012, the Philippines held a meeting with the Member States of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on CCW universalization. In 2014, Poland hosted a seminar in Geneva on joining the CCW. In 2015, Sri Lanka conducted bilateral meetings with non-States Parties in Geneva and held meetings with the League of Arab States and ASEAN, with individual follow-up letters to the Member States of these two groups.

6. As required under Action 10 of the Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization, "Universalization of the Convention and its Protocols" has been established as an agenda item of the annual CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties. Under this agenda item, the Chairperson provides a briefing on actions undertaken in that particular year to promote universalization. Furthermore, when the annual resolution on the CCW is introduced at the First Committee, the sponsoring State speaks on universalization.

7. Under Amended Protocol II, each year the High Contracting Parties have issued an appeal, which "Urge[s] all States that have not yet done so to take all measures to accede to Amended Protocol II as soon as possible. In 2013, Ecuador met in Geneva with all of those High Contracting Parties that were party to the original Protocol II, but not Amended Protocol II. In 2014, Finland met with this same group and carried out demarches in six capitals. In 2015, Latvia met with some CCW High Contracting Parties that have yet to join Amended Protocol V and some States that have not yet joined the CCW.

8. As the most recently agreed instrument of the CCW, there has been an emphasis on promoting the universalization of Protocol V. In 2012, to achieve Protocol V universalization, Belarus, as part of its responsibilities for Protocol V universalization sent messages to all States not party to Protocol V. Further, Belarus worked with the Member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) to promote the CCW and Protocol V. Successive Presidents of Protocol V have been pro-active in promoting universalization of both the CCW and Protocol V. In 2012, Pakistan met with several States not yet party to the CCW in Geneva. In 2013, Sweden carried out demarches in a select number of capitals to urge States not yet party to join the CCW and Protocol V and in 2014, the Czech Republic carried out demarches in ten capitals. In 2015, Bangladesh met with several non-States Parties in Geneva. The Vice Presidents of Protocol V have also been active in promoting universalization. Such examples are in 2012 with Estonia and Sweden as well as Lithuania in 2015, meeting with non-States Parties to promote Protocol V. The Coordinators for Protocol V have made efforts to promote Protocol V. One example is a special briefing that was conducted in 2013 for new comers to Protocol V by the Coordinator on Clearance and Article 4, Mr. Ivan Grinevich of Belarus.

9. The Accelerated Plan of Action urged the "CCW Sponsorship Programme to explore all avenues and opportunities to advance universalization of the Convention and its Protocols". As set out in document CCW/CONF.V/6, the Sponsorship Programme has been critical to supporting efforts under the CCW to promote universalization. Individual members of the Sponsorship Programme's Steering Committee have approached the Implementation Support Unit to discuss potential candidate States for joining the CCW.

10. In the following workshops or conferences there has been an opportunity for the Implementation Support Unit to promote the work of the CCW and to meet with individual non-States Parties: in 2012, Palau with the support of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat held a workshop on unexploded ordnances; in 2013, the Philippines hosted an ASEAN seminar; and in 2015, the Russian Federation held the International Conference on Demining and Counter Improvised Explosive Devices.

11. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) continues to support universalization of the CCW and its Protocols by including this issue in its bilateral discussions with governments and regional seminars on international humanitarian law. Another partner on universalization has been the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

### **III. The activities of the CCW Implementation Support Unit on universalization**

12. The Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization calls on the Implementation Support Unit to "assist High Contracting Parties effort to promote universalization, gather information on States not party and work towards the objective of universal adherence to the Convention and its Protocols." The Implementation Support Unit's work on universalization included drafting and sending messages from the officeholders to States not yet party; drafting messages for the United Nations Secretary General; drafting briefs on universalization for United Nations officials and officeholders; organizing and presenting to bilateral and regional group meetings; meeting with individual States to follow-up on universalization and provide advice on the accession process; coordinating with a range of actors on universalization — which include individual CCW High Contracting Parties, the CCW Sponsorship Programme, United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Mine Action Service, UNODA's regional centres, the ICRC and GICHD; updating the CCW website and producing a publication on the background to the CCW and its Protocols and how to join; and briefing visiting delegations and groups to the United Nations Office at Geneva. One of the most useful aspects of the Implementation Support Unit's work on universalization has been the feedback received from the officeholders and coordination with the Sponsorship Programme. Such information has been used to update briefs on individual non-States Parties.

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