

**GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS OF  
THE STATES 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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**Fourteenth Session**  
**Geneva, 19-23 June 2006**  
Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda  
**Sponsorship programme**

## **VIEWS ON THE CCW SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

Prepared by the United States of America

1. It is important for States Parties to implement their obligations under the CCW, and to encourage non-States Parties to accede to the Convention and its protocols. However, the United States has serious questions about whether a sponsorship program is the best way to achieve these goals. In addition, such a program could set a precedent within the UN system and raise expectations for assistance among requesting states. Further, the United States is concerned that discussion of the sponsorship program could detract from work on the potential protocol on mines other than anti-personnel mines (“MOTAPM”). The MOTAPM protocol is the most important work on the GGE’s plate and it is imperative that we make sufficient progress on it this summer so that we can adopt a protocol at the Review Conference.
2. The CCW was not intended to be a standing body that serves as a discussion forum. In our view, a sponsorship program that simply brings new States to the CCW meetings to learn more about the Convention and Protocols would move the CCW toward this “standing body” format. The United States does not believe that it is advisable to start this type of program when the number of CCW meetings after the Review Conference is likely to decrease.
3. In addition, there are many other questions that would require answers before such program could be instituted. A few examples follow:
  - (i) What specific criteria would be used to choose States to receive assistance? The priorities listed in the paper are broad. If economic factors are used, what about less-developed countries that already participate in these meetings? Would they be eligible to request assistance and, if so, would this defeat the program’s purpose? If not, would a sponsorship program be seen as unfair to already-participating less-developed countries?
  - (ii) Would the requesting states’ record of compliance with its law of war obligations be part of the criteria? Would repressive governments be eligible to receive assistance?

- (iii) Would non-States Parties participating under the sponsorship program clearly be limited to observer status?
- (iv) What mechanism would ensure that the States participating in the CCW through sponsorship are acting on their own initiative and are not unduly influenced by their sponsors? Would particular States Parties sponsor particular countries, or would there be a pool of money? Would the States Parties that contribute to the fund be publicly identified as donors? Would the deliberations of the proposed steering committee be open? What mechanism would ensure that the criteria for selection are applied in a fair and impartial manner?
- (v) How would paying for guest speakers work? Who would nominate these speakers: any State Party or only those that donate to the Trust Fund? What criteria would be used to choose speakers?
- (vi) In addition to the time and energy of those that would sit on the Steering Committee, are there any other costs associated with its operation and, if so, who would bear them?

4. In short, while the United States considers it important to expand the numbers of States Parties to the CCW and its protocols and encourages States Parties to participate fully in CCW work, we question whether sponsorship to attend meetings in Geneva would be the best use of Parties' money. The United States believes that it is more beneficial for States and other organizations to use available funds for more direct activities, such as regional seminars or bilateral consultations. Many of these activities are identified in the paper on Universalization (CCW/GGE/XIII/5) and do not require a formal sponsorship program.

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