

**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**

CCW/MSP/2007/WP.2
7 December 2007

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

2007 session
Geneva, 7-13 November 2007
Agenda item 10

**Consideration of the report of the work of the
Group of Governmental Experts on the
application and implementation of existing
international humanitarian law to specific
munitions that may cause explosive remnants
of war, with particular focus on cluster
munitions, including the factors affecting
their reliability and their technical and
design characteristics, with a view to
minimizing the humanitarian impact of the
use of these munitions**

**Prospects for the work of the Group of Governmental Experts
on the problem of cluster munitions**

Submitted by the Russian Federation

1. On 13 November 2007, the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW adopted a mandate on the beginning of a new stage in efforts to address the problem of cluster munitions. At the Meeting, the delegation of the Russian Federation explained, on several occasions, its approach to this matter.
2. The Russian Federation consciously agreed to embark on the new stage of work on cluster munitions, bearing in mind the importance of practical measures to strengthen the Convention, as well as the international community's concern at the inappropriate use of this type of weapon, which has given rise to humanitarian problems.

3. The Russian Federation has lingering doubts about the specific “product” of future work, and it continues to believe that the practical basis for starting the negotiations process is not very well developed. There are still considerable differences in countries’ approaches to ways and means of reducing humanitarian risks from the use of such weapons. Basic provisions relating to cluster munitions remain undefined. In particular, there is no definition of “cluster munitions”; from a formal point of view, this raises the question of whether it will be possible to find mutually acceptable approaches.

4. Difficult work lies ahead. However, the beginning of negotiations makes it necessary to develop proposals that would be in the interests of each party to the CCW.

5. The Russian Federation’s serious approach is demonstrated by the high level of competence of the military and technical experts in its delegation, the composition of the delegation, and the considerable number of documents that the Russian Federation has already prepared on this subject.

6. While the Russian Federation is ready for the new stage of work on cluster munitions, it stresses that future proposals on the subject will be acceptable to the Russian Federation only when a number of basic conditions are met:

(a) First, the Russian Federation is prepared to support only those proposals that will not lead to a reduction of its defence capabilities in connection with the use of cluster munitions;

(b) Secondly, the implementation of proposals must not have any economic or financial implications;

(c) Thirdly, the basic focus of future proposals should be primarily on developing measures to ensure the appropriate use of cluster munitions and should therefore be directed towards reducing the humanitarian consequences for the civilian population, and not towards technical restrictions on cluster munitions. In the view of the Russian Federation, any technical proposals should be non-binding and provide for a considerable transition period.

7. During the Meeting, delegations repeatedly referred to the importance of serious approaches to solving the humanitarian problems caused by the use of cluster munitions. The Russian Federation's doubts concerning whether the Meeting is prepared to proceed to a new stage in its work on cluster munitions are dictated by its responsible and serious approach to this subject, which is based on realism and the need to maintain a balance between humanitarian and defence considerations.

8. As new work begins on this complex subject, the Russian Federation is prepared to base such work on these approaches.
