



The 2014 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons  
(Geneva, 13-14 November 2014)

Statement by Ambassador Vinicio Mati  
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

let me first of all join the other speakers in congratulating you on your chairmanship and assure you of my delegation's support.

Italy aligns itself to the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks on specific aspects in my national capacity.

We consider the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons an important milestone on the way to a more secure and peaceful world. Fully sharing its guiding principles, and deeply involved in the promotion and implementation of International Humanitarian Law, Italy is a party not only to all protocols, amendments to the CCW and Amended Protocol II, but also to all the disarmament Conventions aimed at mitigating the humanitarian and socio-economic impact of conventional weapons, as well as to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In this context, we firmly believe that the CCW provides a unique forum to gather diplomatic, legal and military expertise, as well as the contribution of specialized institutions and civil society organizations, in order to address both current and emerging issues.

We share the view that the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols still represents a central issue for our common goals, and shall remain a standing item of the agenda of the annual meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW.

Italy will continue to strongly support the Accelerated Plan of Action on Universalization, and the efforts made by the Presidencies of the three CCW meetings, the United Nations and the other international bodies involved in this task.

We welcome the accession of Iraq to the Convention and its annexed Protocols, and that of Greece to Protocol V. We call upon the States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying the Convention and its Protocols in the near future.

We are also looking forward to further progress towards the full implementation of the CCW. In this respect, we would like to stress the importance of compliance with the provisions of the Convention and its annexed Protocols, and to encourage, in particular, the submission of the annual compliance reports.

Mr. President,

We are pleased to note the valuable and constructive discussions we had earlier this week on Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, in light of the outcome of the recent meetings of experts and of the reports and recommendations presented by the Coordinators.

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of Explosive Remnants of War and explosive devices that have indiscriminate effects.

Italy is concretely engaged in the field of international cooperation and assistance. Over the last few years, we have allocated more than 12 millions Euros to mine action programmes, mostly focused on the clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance, including cluster munitions remnants, stockpile destruction and assistance to victims.

Mr. President,

we believe that this meeting will not only allow us to take stock of the progress achieved so far in the universalization and implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, but also to have further considerations on additional types of weapons that are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects.

Among them one recurring topic, which has been discussed in this body for several years, is that of Mines Other Than Antipersonnel Mines (MOTAPM). We continue to be convinced that the humanitarian and socio-economic consequences of persistent and undetectable MOTAPM deserve renewed efforts. In this spirit, we consider very important to keep this issue high on our agenda.

We are also concerned about the growing political and humanitarian impact of the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), particularly on civilian populations. We therefore look forward to further discussion on the topic, also in light of the conclusion of yesterday's meeting on AP II with a view to explore ways to improve international cooperation in countering the threat posed by IEDs worldwide.

Mr. President,

the CCW has the merit to address the concerns posed by existing weapons, but also to prevent the development of new types of weapons that would have been unacceptable under the basic International Humanitarian Law principles.

Against this backdrop, we highly appreciated the work done by the informal meeting of experts in May this year to discuss the issue of emerging technologies in the area of the Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWs) in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention. In order to further enhance our common understanding of this important issue and its multiple technical, legal, ethical and military aspects, Italy strongly supports the renewal of the mandate of another meeting of experts in 2015.

Mr. President,

the vitality of the Convention is a key element for the implementation, and further development, of the principles and rules of International Humanitarian Law.

We are looking forward to the outputs of this Conference in order to find further effective ways to advance our common objectives. We believe that we need to focus the work planned for next year on concrete challenges which deserve our outmost attention.

Allow me to conclude by underlining the essential contribution of civil society to the universalization and implementation of the CCW and its annexed Protocols. We would like to welcome the large participation of civil society organizations and NGOs at the Conference, and to highlight the positive impact it has in our work, by bringing additional expertise and knowledge from the field. We therefore support the continued participation of civil society organizations and NGOs to the CCW in accordance with its rules of procedure.

Thank you Mr. President.

\*\*\*