



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

**Amended Protocol II
additional 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**

Twenty-first Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties
Geneva, 12 November 2019

Agenda item 7: General exchange of views

**Statement by Amb. Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Mister President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your appointment and assure you the full support of my delegation. Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister President,

I also want to thank you for the non-paper you prepared in view of our discussion, which we think focus carefully on the main challenges we need to work on.

Amended Protocol II plays a fundamental role in guaranteeing respect for the rules and principles of International Humanitarian Law. We reiterate our call to non-State Parties to accede to it, and to Parties to the original Protocol II to ratify its amended text, as soon as possible. The possibility to promote the universalization through regional appropriate fora is an option we should explore, as it has been the case for other Conventions.

As regards national reporting, given its important value in building trust and allowing to measure progress in implementation, Italy calls on all Parties to participate in this highly beneficial exercise.

Mister President,

Italy attaches utmost importance to assistance and cooperation in mine action, as a crucial tool to prevent indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic impacts, especially on civilians. Since 2001, we have devoted more than 58 million Euros to Mine Action programmes, with a particular focus on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education, and victim assistance.

In 2019, Italy is supporting UNMAS activities in Iraq, Colombia, Palestine, Sudan, and Syria, relating to clearance, mine-risk education and survivor and indirect victims assistance; ICRC activities in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, relating to survivors' physical rehabilitation and socio-economic reinsertion; UNDP activities in Yemen for national mine action capacity development and related technical support for detection and clearance operations; UNICEF activities in Ukraine relating to mine-risk education in schools; the OAS in Colombia for activities relating to psycho-social and reinsertion assistance to ERW survivors.

Mister President,

We also share the deep concern of the international community at the growing use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and at the serious security threats they pose to civilians, humanitarian workers and peacekeeping personnel. IEDs are frequently used in attacks deliberately targeting large numbers of civilians and are responsible for huge numbers of casualties each year.

In addition to have killed or harmed thousands of victims, IEDs also have considerable reverberating effects, such as displacement of populations, destruction of infrastructure and of historical and cultural heritage sites, ongoing psychological suffering and economic deprivation. The use of IEDs, particularly by non-state armed groups, reaches dramatic levels in specific States and regions.

We have greatly welcomed the work conducted within Protocol II on this issue since 2009 and we support continued engagement on the issue in this framework.

Mister President,

Since Amended Protocol II is the only IHL instrument which explicitly addresses the use of mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM), let me take this opportunity to briefly address the matter from our perspective. Italy continues to be concerned at the humanitarian impact and the long-term consequences arising from the indiscriminate use of these weapons.

For Italy, the point of departure in this discussion remains the need to ensure that any weapon that is not prohibited is used in conformity with the rules and principles of international humanitarian law, particularly relating to discrimination, proportionality, and necessary precautions. In our view, in order to prevent and reduce the humanitarian impact of MOTAPM, it is necessary to restrict their use and to include a number of precautions reflected in Amended Protocol II and its Technical Annex in national military doctrines and plans. These measures are integrated into the Italian Forces' practice, and are meant not only to decrease the possible harm to civilians but also to facilitate clearance activities at the end of hostilities, and to revert decontaminated territories to their social and economic use.

We believe this is an important issue which deserves further discussion and should remain on the agenda of Amended Protocol II.

Thank you, Mister President.