



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

**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**

Meeting of the High Contracting Parties
Geneva, 13 November 2019

**Agenda item 7:
General exchange of views**

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

Mister Chair,

At the outset, let me join previous delegations in congratulating you on your appointment, and in assuring you of Italy's full support for a productive meeting.

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

Mister Chair,

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its annexed Protocols are fundamental instruments for creating and promoting International Humanitarian Law.

Italy has always believed that the unique composition of the CCW, combining diplomatic, legal and military expertise, and its openness to the active contribution of specialized institutions and civil society organizations, make it the appropriate forum to address current and emerging issues relating to weapons development and use.

Universal membership in the Convention and its Protocols is a key goal that should continue to be strongly supported. We call on States not yet party to ratify or accede to the Convention and its Protocols as soon as possible.

Mister Chair,

We believe that one of the main challenges we face is the extremely serious humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). There is overwhelming evidence that the use of such weapons can have a long-term impact on the recover, development and cultural life of affected communities. We deem of key importance to reaffirm that the rules and principles of International Humanitarian Law must be complied with in all circumstances, starting with the principle of humanity and the rules of distinction, proportionality, precaution and military necessity. In this respect, we highly appreciated the convening by the Austrian Government of the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare on 1st and 2nd October and we support the diplomatic process potentially leading to a political declaration aimed at strengthening the collective commitment in this issue.

We also welcome the intersessional work conducted so far in the framework of the CCW, which allowed in-depth exchanges on several issues of concern, including on Mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM). In our view, it is necessary to shed further light on the national approaches, in order to prevent and reduce their possible humanitarian and development impacts. We believe that, first of all, MOTAPM use should be restricted and aimed at specific goals relating to reducing the mobility of adverse parties' heavy military vehicles and of hindering enemy logistical movements. In addition, such use must be subject to the precautions contained in Amended Protocol II and its Technical Annex. Such precautionary measures are integrated into the Italian Forces' practice, and are meant to decrease the possible harm to civilians, to facilitate clearance activities at the end of hostilities and to revert decontaminated territories to their social and economic use.

We believe EWIPA and MOTAPM are two important issues meriting further discussion, and that they should remain on the agenda of the CCW.

Italy reiterates its concern on the growing use and impact of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), which pose serious threats to civilians, humanitarian workers and peacekeeping personnel in conflict afflicted and post-conflict areas. Both preventative and remedial strategies must be pursued to counter such threats, at national and international levels, within and outside the CCW framework. We therefore welcome ongoing work within AP2 on the issue.

Mister Chair,

Italy especially welcomes the in-depth work carried out by the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. We are of the view that human control is fundamental to ensure that all weapons systems are developed, deployed, and used in compliance with International Humanitarian Law.

In particular, we deem it necessary for the decisions to use lethal force and to produce lethal effects to remain in the hands of human beings. We believe that the continuation of the work of the GGE in the next two years will provide the opportunity to further discuss aspects relating to the characteristics and implications of LAWS with a view to paving the way towards a consensual political declaration.

Mister Chair,

Finally, I would like to thank you for your efforts to address the financial situation of the Convention and its Protocols. We welcome your proposals to ensure adequate financial liquidity to the CCW, and are ready to continue engaging with all States Parties to identify long-term solutions, able to put the Convention on a firm financial footing and to endow it with adequate implementation support.

Thank you, Mister Chair.