

**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)**
(21-23 November 2018)

General Exchange of Views

Statement by Pakistan

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship of the CCW's annual Meeting of High Contracting Parties. We commend you for the extensive preparatory work undertaken by you in advance of the meeting, in particular on the financial issues. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in bringing the meeting to a successful conclusion.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Mr. Chairman,

There is a need to continue promoting universal adherence and implementation of the Convention. Efforts towards universalization are of critical importance and should remain a priority. We commend the efforts undertaken in this regard by you as well as by the Secretariat.

The strength of this Convention lies in the balance that it maintains between military necessity and humanitarian concerns. This aspect of the Convention needs to be preserved and strengthened.

Pakistan is party to all of the five Protocols of the CCW. The Standard Operating Procedures being followed by our Armed Forces comply with the provisions of the CCW Protocols. We have submitted all the requisite national reports regarding our compliance, including for the last reporting period.

We are also proud of our active contribution to de-mining and ERW clearance efforts in different parts of the world particularly in the context of United Nations peace-keeping operations, to which Pakistan remains one of the largest troop contributors. We reaffirm our readiness to assist other High Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention and its annexed Protocols.

Mr. Chairman,

We participated actively in the two sessions of the open-ended Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) held this year. While some incremental progress was made by the GGE in identifying “emerging commonalities, conclusions and recommendations” including a list of “possible guiding principles”, important work still remains to be done for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges posed by emerging technologies in the area of LAWS. We, therefore, fully support and endorse the GGE’s recommendation that the GGE should meet for a duration of ten days in 2019 with the same mandate.

States Parties have now attained a sufficient degree of common understanding on the various aspects of LAWS. We need to shift gears now and move towards the development of concrete policy recommendations, which should be the prime focus of the GGE meetings next year. My delegation will engage with that process in a constructive and cooperative manner.

Over time, the concerns surrounding LAWS have exacerbated and become more pronounced. The consequences, especially on international peace and security, are too grave to be ignored. This process launched within the CCW can only be sustained if it is result-oriented and seen to be heeding the concerns of all member states.

Mr. Chairman,

The issue of Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines, or MOTAPM, continues to generate divergent viewpoints and perspectives amongst States parties. There exists a wide difference of opinion on this topic including in term of its scope, definitions, transfers, cooperation and assistance as well as some technical details. Pakistan considers Anti-Vehicle Mines as legitimate defensive weapons, which help in checking aggression and offensive use of force, especially in situations of conventional military imbalance and long land borders.

The humanitarian concerns linked with MOTAPM arise from their “irresponsible use”, especially by non-state actors. Their use by States Parties is already regulated by the existing provisions of CCW’s Amended Protocol II as well as International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in general.

The humanitarian concerns arising from the irresponsible use of MOTAPM can also be addressed by exploring some tangible and practical solutions, for instance, through the development of sophisticated yet affordable mine detectors and their sharing through an agreed cooperation and assistance mechanism under the CCW.

At this juncture, we need to strengthen the implementation of the existing provisions of CCW Amended Protocol II. Further amendments to these provisions would hamper our efforts towards universalization of the Convention, thus undermining our collective efforts in this endeavour.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan has always met all its financial obligations under the Convention and its annexed Protocols in full and on time. We look forward to working with other fellow High Contracting Parties during this meeting in order to find a durable and sustainable solution for the ongoing financial challenges as well as for addressing questions related to secretarial support. The success of any administrative or institutional arrangements that we put in place would still continue to depend on the full and timely payment by States Parties of their assessed contributions in accordance with their financial obligations.

In conclusion, we renew our pledge to continue complying with our obligations and cooperating with other High Contracting Parties for the successful implementation of the Convention and its annexed Protocols. We are confident that full implementation would help reduce humanitarian suffering worldwide.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.