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**PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA  
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

**2013 Meeting of High Contracting Parties  
to CCW  
14 November 2013 A.N.  
Geneva**

**Statement**

**by**

**Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma  
Permanent Representative of India  
to the Conference on Disarmament**

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**Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma,  
Permanent Representative of India to the CD, at the  
2013 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the CCW,  
Geneva, November 14, 2013**

Mr. President,

The Indian delegation is pleased to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this meeting. I would like to convey the full support of my delegation in the fulfillment of your responsibilities. We would also like to congratulate other members of the bureau on their election.

Mr. President,

India attaches high importance to the CCW as one of the important instruments of international humanitarian law within the UN framework. We are privileged to be a party to the CCW, all of its five protocols as well as Amended Article I of the Convention. We are committed to taking all necessary steps to implement our obligations under the CCW and its Protocols, including Amended Protocol II and Protocol V.

The Convention and its Annexed Protocols, while stipulating measures to mitigate humanitarian concerns arising from the use of specific weapons and weapon systems also take into account the military necessity of such weapons and thus strive to strike a balance between these two imperatives. It remains the only forum of a universal character that brings together all the main users and producers of certain conventional weapons, thus ensuring that the instruments which emerge have greater prospect of making a meaningful impact on the ground.

The universality of the CCW and its annexed protocols remains an important goal for which the primary responsibility rests with the States Parties to the CCW. It is a matter of satisfaction that we continue to make steady progress towards universalization every year. We welcome Zambia and Kuwait on joining the CCW in 2013. We support the Plan of Action as well as the Sponsorship

Programme on universalization. India has made regular financial contribution to the Sponsorship Programme and has been an active participant in the meetings of the Steering Committee of the Programme.

We believe that full and effective implementation of the obligations contained in CCW by all States Parties is essential for the success of the Convention. States Parties bear the responsibility for the national implementation of obligations undertaken by them under the Convention and its protocols and for submitting their national compliance reports as decided by the Third Review Conference. India has submitted its Annual Report on compliance every year since 2008. We support measures aimed at improving the rate of submission of compliance reports.

In recent years the CCW has seen good progress in the implementation of Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War as well as Amended Protocol II. The discussion on IEDs under AP-II is useful in addressing the threats posed by the use of IEDs by terrorists and non-state actors. However, there was disappointment at the failure to adopt the cluster munitions protocol at the Fourth CCW Review Conference in 2011. The adoption of this protocol would have addressed humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions and underscored the dynamism of the CCW framework. Further, in 2012 the renewed attention to MOTAPM reflected that there was no change in the underlying positions on the issue. Despite these difficulties, we continue to believe in the importance and salience of the CCW in strengthening the rules and principles of international humanitarian law.

It is important for the international community to continue considering ways and means for progressive development of the rules of international law applicable to advanced conventional weapons which have devastating and indiscriminate effects. In this context, we agree that the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems could be further explored in the CCW. We appreciate the efforts of the Chair in organizing informal consultations and seminars to enable delegations to learn more about this issue in the run up to this Meeting of States Parties. We support a

discussion mandate for an informal meeting of experts on the issue in 2014. Such an informal meeting should allow an open and frank exchange of views on technical, legal, policy and humanitarian aspects of the issue, without prejudice to any viewpoint.

Mr. President,

I would like to raise an issue of high importance to some delegations with respect to the presence of one particular NGO in this meeting whose activities may not be in line with national laws of certain States Parties to the CCW. While we value the work and contribution of a variety of entities in the implementation of the CCW, this NGO has no basis to be present in our meetings. We engaged constructively in informal consultations held pursuant to the decision of the 2012 Annual Meeting of States Parties in this regard and request further consultations to bring this matter to a close ahead of the future CCW meetings.

We appreciate the valuable participation of the ICRC and non-governmental organizations of relevant competence in the CCW process. They should continue to contribute as in the past to enhancing our understanding of and sensitivity to IHL issues in a neutral and apolitical manner.

Thank you.