

**Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma,  
Permanent Representative of India to the CD, at the  
2014 Meeting of HCPs to the CCW,  
Geneva, November 13, 2014**

Mr. President,

The Indian delegation is pleased to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this meeting and would like to convey its full support in the fulfillment of your responsibilities. We would also like to congratulate other members of the bureau on their election. We would like to place on record our appreciation for the efforts of Ambassador Jean-Hughes Simon-Michel of France as chair of the CCW and as the coordinator for informal discussions on Lethal Autonomous Weapon systems (LAWS) this year.

Mr. President,

2. 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.

3. 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. The CCW 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 continuing relevance of the CCW is also important addressing challenges posed by the development or use of new weapons and their systems with respect to international law, in particular international humanitarian law.

4. The universality of the CCW and its Annexed Protocols remains an important goal. We welcome Iraq on its becoming as a High Contracting Party (HCP) to the CCW this year. We support the Plan of Action as well as the Sponsorship Programme on universalization. India has made regular financial

contributions to the Sponsorship Programme and has been an active participant in the meetings of its Steering Committee. We are happy to announce a further contribution of US\$ 10,000 to the CCW Sponsorship Programme.

5. Full and effective implementation of the obligations contained in CCW by all High Contracting Parties is essential for the success of the Convention. HCPs 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 within the framework decided by the Third Review Conference. Any proposal for amending this framework with respect to the Convention or its Protocols would require in depth discussion and approval by consensus at the next CCW Review Conference. India has regularly submitted Annual Reports on compliance every year since 2008. We support measures aimed at encouraging submission of reports by High Contracting Parties.

6. In recent years the CCW has seen considerable 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 has been useful in addressing the threats posed by the use of IEDs by terrorists and non-state actors. We support the continuation of these discussions. The failure to adopt a protocol on Cluster Munitions at the Fourth Review Conference in 2011 was disappointing and a missed opportunity given that the CCW framework could have produced an outcome that included all the main producers and users of Cluster Munitions, which alas is still not the case with other legal instruments. The discussions in 2012 and last year showed that there was no change in the underlying positions of various delegations on the issue of MOTAPMs.

7. 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 support continued discussions on LAWs in 2015, on the basis of the mandate as agreed in the Meeting of State Parties in 2013. India participated in the Expert Level meeting in May this year under the commendable chairmanship of Ambassador Jean- Hughes Simon-Michel of France. We feel that LAWs should be assessed not just from the view point of their compatibility with international law including international humanitarian law but also on their impact on international security if there is dissemination of such weapon systems. We would like the CCW process to emerge strengthened from these discussions, resulting in increased systemic controls on international armed conflicts embedded in international law in a manner that does not widen the technology gap amongst states or encourage the

use of lethal force to settle international disputes just because it affords the prospects of lesser casualties to one side or that its use can be shielded from the dictates of public conscience, one of the key principles of International Humanitarian Law.

Mr. President,

8. India values the work and contribution of NGOs in our consideration of CCW issues according to the rules of procedure, as well as the important role of the ICRC. We appreciate the informal consultations conducted by Ambassador Henczel as Chair designate of the CCW to address certain concerns in this regard.

Thank you.

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