



European Union

EU Statement

**Meeting of the High Contracting Parties
to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)**

Agenda Item 15

Financial issues related to the Convention and its annexed Protocols

Geneva, 21-23 November 2018

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We welcome this opportunity to address the financial situation of the CCW which is a matter of urgency and a cause for deep concern.

The current situation is neither sustainable nor acceptable. Meetings have been cancelled and the functioning of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) suspended, thereby hampering the effective operation of the CCW and its Protocols. Ad hoc measures such as reducing the conference costs or staff costs have been adopted, but they do not provide any sustainable solution to the problems related to late and non-payments of assessed contributions. Hence, the financial situation has not improved. The situation has also negatively impacted the status and the operation of the Convention: Since last year, no single country joined the CCW and the rate of submission of national reports has notably decreased in the absence of the ISU,

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

which is a cause for concern. These examples demonstrate that no instrument can function without proper capacity and without sound finances.

The main reason for the critical situation is the repeated failure by some High Contracting Parties to comply with their financial obligations. We call on all States who have not yet done so to pay their contributions in full and on time and to settle their outstanding arrears without further delay. This would demonstrate real commitment to multilateral cooperation. Administrative difficulties are not a valid excuse for not complying with financial obligations.

We thank the present Latvian chair and the previous UK Chair for their efforts to put this important Convention on a more solid financial footing. The measures adopted last year provide a solid basis, which we need to further improve, in particular with regard to managing the cash flow (financial liquidity) and addressing structural arrears. We call for the full implementation of the financial measures adopted at last year's meeting with a view to improving the financial stability of the Convention. To ensure sufficient cash flow in the meantime, we acknowledge the Chair's proposal to create a temporary contingency provision in the annual budget at the level of 15% and to offer the High Contracting Parties the possibility to make voluntary contributions to a new reserve, in a way that does not decrease political pressure on States with arrears to fulfil their obligations. Any potential solution should in no way be a means of exempting countries that do not pay their contributions. We invite all High Contracting Parties to draw conclusions from repeated non-payments and consider appropriate measures such as suspending voting rights or running for specific positions in this forum.

Thank you, Mr. Chair