

**Meeting of the  
High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons  
Geneva, 12–13 November 2015**

**Statement by Bulgaria**

Mister Chairman,

Let me first congratulate you on your appointment as president of our meeting and pledge the full support of our delegation.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the excellent work of the Implementation Support Unit and various coordinators.

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I will make some remarks from national perspective.

Bulgaria is committed to strengthen the implementation and enhance the relevance of the Conventional Weapons Convention as an important instrument of the International Humanitarian Law.

The universalisation of the Convention is an important tool to ensure the effectiveness of the CCW and its protocols. We commend the efforts of the current and previous CCW Presidents in this regard as well as the steps undertaken by the ISU. We urge those states that are not yet parties to the CCW to consider ratifying or acceding to the Convention and its protocols. We would also like to appeal to those High Contracting Parties that have not done so to accede to the amended article 2 of the CCW that expands the scope of the Convention and its protocols to situations of non-international armed conflict. Recent events and the disturbing reports on use of incendiary weapons against civilian population, which are of great concern to us, emphasize once again the importance of universalization and implementation of the CCW and its protocols.

The full implementation of the CCW can be ensured through compliance with its provisions. In this context we stress the importance of submission of annual compliance reports by all States Parties.

The CCW, as a forum that gathers diplomatic and military expertise, is a right place to address issues of new and emerging types of weapons and technologies and their relevance to the principles of the International Humanitarian Law. In this regard we appreciate the discussions on Lethal Autonomous Weapons systems (LAWs), initiated by France in 2014 and continued during the informal Meeting of Experts in April this

year under the chairmanship of Ambassador Biontino of Germany. The meeting addressed important legal, technical, military and ethical aspects of this issue. We support the continuation of this discussion in order to further deepen the understanding on this topic.

The issue of mines other than anti-personal mines (MOTAPM) remains one of the important topics on the CCW agenda. We share the concerns about the humanitarian impact that may be caused by the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of MOTAPM. At the same time, the right balance has to be found between the humanitarian concern and military considerations as this is a legitimate type of weapon if protection of civilians is ensured in accordance with the International Humanitarian Law. Therefore we consider it is worth continuing the discussion on this issue in CCW.

Yesterday we had a fruitful discussion under Protocol II on the Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Their use poses serious humanitarian and security problems. It leads to increased number of victims and affects seriously many countries in the world. Enhanced cooperation is needed to respond to this threat. We believe that the answers to the questionnaire presented by the coordinators, France and Moldova, to which Bulgaria also provided input, will contribute to improving the international cooperation in counter-IED efforts.

I would like to express our appreciation for the valuable contribution of the civil society representatives to the work of the CCW. They bring knowledge and expertise that are beneficial to our deliberations. We support continuous participation of the civil society representatives in the CCW in accordance with its rules of procedure.

Finally, with regard to the Fifth Review Conference in 2016, we expect a sound preparatory process that will pave the way for a successful Review Conference.

I thank you.