

Statement by Israel
By Mr. Eitan Levon, Minister-Counsellor
Representative to the Conference on Disarmament
Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on
Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)
14 November 2013

Mr. President,

At the outset please allow me to congratulate you upon the assumption of the Presidency of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW and express our delegation's full cooperation and support in the fulfillment of your duties. We are confident that you will steer our deliberations to a successful outcome.

Mr. President,

Israel continues to be a consistent supporter of the CCW. It is Israel's longstanding view that the CCW is a valuable and effective instrument for creating international norms which contribute substantially, and in a very realistic way, to international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts and the protection of civilians. Israel values the CCW and its achievements and recognizes its uniqueness as the only forum which includes all of the most relevant actors, thereby rendering the CCW's achievements as those which have the greatest practical effect on the ground. Its strength lies in its fundamental tenet and obligation to search for the appropriate balance between military and humanitarian considerations.

Accordingly, Israel was encouraged by the genuine efforts made by members of the CCW, especially by the major users and producers of cluster

munitions, to agree on a sixth Protocol on Cluster Munitions in its Fourth Review Conference 2 years ago, following four years of serious negotiations. Israel has played an active and constructive role in the CCW negotiations on this and other protocols. We are still of the view that this sixth protocol would have a beneficial influence on the ground and yield significant humanitarian impact, while preserving the necessary balance between humanitarian and military concerns.

Mr. President,

Israel attaches great importance to promoting universality of the CCW. With 117 Member states, we must strive to exact greater efforts at increasing the CCW's membership and its universalization. In some areas of the world, the lack of membership is more apparent than in others, and requires the direction of focused efforts. Such is the case of the Middle East, our own region, where very few states have expressed their consent to be bound by the CCW.

Mr. President,

The turbulence in the Middle East poses great challenges, which should prompt the international community to work together to prevent illicit trafficking and terrorism. In this context, Israel emphasizes again its deep concern over the illicit proliferation of MANPADS and short-range rockets. These weapons could present a serious threat to civil, commercial and military aviation if they fall into the wrong hands. The international community must allocate the necessary resources to address this grave danger effectively, and focus on concrete steps to prevent these weapons from reaching terrorists and non-state actors.

Mr. President,

Israel would like to reiterate its position, according to which, the existence of two instruments dealing with the issue of mines, booby traps and other explosive devices, namely the original Protocol II, and the Amended Protocol II, creates legal and political complexities that require our attention as to the most appropriate and practical way to overcome the challenge of bringing states to take upon themselves the obligations of APII rather than the original protocol.

While states clearly have the prerogative to decide to which instrument they wish to be bound, we should nevertheless explore the most appropriate ways and means to encourage them to take this path, which in our view would serve to strengthen the CCW and its humanitarian impact. There are different options in this respect and we should not limit ourselves prematurely to the adoption of one method.

Mr. President,

Another issue which arises regarding APII, refers to the best way to advance forward the issue of IEDs. This is a devastating problem plaguing many regions of the world, and the preferred weapon of choice of terrorists. My delegation has elaborated on this issue in our statement yesterday. We trust and hope that this matter, which is vital to many CCW States Parties, including those whose armed forces as well as assistance providing personnel are put in danger while participating in peace keeping operations, could be further advanced in a very concrete way in near future.

Mr. President,

With regards to **MOTAPM**, Israel would like to see this issue discussed further in the CCW provided it takes into account the necessary balance between military and humanitarian considerations and has realistic prospects to advance the matter further. A great deal of progress has already been achieved in recent years which would hopefully focus discussions on the specific issues that need additional consideration.

Thank you, Mr. President.