

Ireland National Statement
Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
Meeting of High Contracting Parties
November 2017
Agenda Item 9 - Protocol III - Incendiary Weapons

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Ireland is pleased that Protocol III was included in this year's formal agenda following the recommendation from the 2016 Review Conference.

Mr. Chair,

The continued use of incendiary weapons is of significant concern to my delegation. Reports of the recent use of incendiary weapons in armed conflict, in particular the reports of the use of air-delivered incendiary weapons within concentrations of civilians in Syria are disturbing. The prohibitions and restrictions on the use of incendiary weapons Protocol III was due to a recognition of the indiscriminate effects these weapons have on civilians and civilian objects and the grievous injuries caused by their use. We call on all parties to conflicts to comply strictly with CCW Protocol III and would urge those states which have not already done so to adopt Protocol III as a matter of urgency.

Mr. Chair,

There have been many developments in the means and methods of warfare since 1980 including in the design and employment of incendiary weapons. We believe it is timely to discuss the implementation and continuing relevance of this protocol. There are areas where greater clarity could be achieved such as in Article 1 with regard to the scope of the exemptions from the definition of weapons with incidental incendiary effects such as illuminants etc and also of weapons with combined effects which include incendiary effects.

In Article 2 paragraph 2 we believe that further clarity is required on what is understood by feasible precautions and clear separation from concentrations of civilians in relation to attacks with incendiary weapons other than air-delivered incendiary weapons. We also feel that there would be benefit in further clarifying the nature of the exceptions from the prohibitions on attacks on forests and other plant cover as set out in Article 2 Paragraph 4.

As such Ireland sees a need for the retention of Protocol III on the agenda for the Meeting of HCP in 2018 to discuss these concerns in greater depth, and would proposed setting aside one day if feasible to review the implementation and relevance of the Protocol, and to bring clarity to the nature and scope of the exemptions we have already mentioned in both Articles 1 and 2.

Thank you, Chair.