

## **Statement by Ambassador Jayant Prasad, Permanent Representative of India to the Conference on Disarmament at the Ninth Annual Conference of the States Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects – November 6, 2007**

Mr. President,

My delegation is most happy to see you in the chair of the 9th Annual Conference of the States Parties to the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and other Devices (Amended Protocol II) of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW Convention). The Swiss contribution to the CCW process is well recognised and we welcome your guidance of the Conference. You have our fullest support to ensure its success.

India ratified the Amended Protocol in September 1999, within a year of its entry into force. 88 of the 103 States Parties to the CCW Convention, representing an overwhelming majority of the global population, including the major landmine producing States, are now party to the Protocol. It remains a comprehensive, legally-binding instrument addressing the humanitarian risks posed by the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of anti-personnel mines as well as anti-vehicle mines, while taking into account their continued military necessity. We welcome Cameroon, Niger and Tunisia as its latest adherents.

The Amended Protocol strengthens the erstwhile regulation of landmines and booby traps by extending its scope to cover both international and internal armed conflicts, banning the use of non-detectable anti-personnel mines, for their detection and removal at the end of a conflict, prohibiting their transfer, and limiting the use of non-self-destructing or self-deactivating mines to monitored and marked areas to prevent non-combatant casualties. If fully implemented, it will contribute significantly to addressing humanitarian concerns, while allowing States to use these mines in a responsible and regulated manner.

In keeping with its commitment to faithfully implement the Protocol, India has fulfilled its obligations with regard to all its technical parameters. Since 1st January 1997, India has not produced any non-detectable mines. The design and development of detectable anti-personnel mines was completed and all necessary technical issues resolved, with 8 grams metallic rings fitted on all anti-personnel mines stocked for operations. Furthermore, Government of India is in the process of increasing the existing scales of its minefield marking and laying stores.

It would be appropriate at this Conference to provide details of India's national implementation of Amended Protocol-II under specific heads.

### **Imparting information to the armed forces**

- The provisions of the CCW Convention and Amended Protocol-II are being regularly disseminated to the armed forces, through presentations on the subject at seminars, symposiums and conferences held under the aegis of the Army.
- Military courses of instruction include this subject in the syllabi of relevant army training programmes as a mandatory requirement, both for the officers and other ranks, including junior commissioned officers.
- A booklet on India's obligations under Amended Protocol-II has been published and handed out to all armed forces formations and units.
- Officers of the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs and the Services Headquarters interact regularly for exchanging ideas and information on the implementation of the provisions of the Protocol.

### **Imparting information to the civilian population**

- An integral part of our government's efforts to avoid civilian casualties is to enhance public awareness on landmines, in particular anti-personnel landmines. The Indian army has disseminated information on mines laid along the border areas, as part of military operations, to the concerned civilians, besides placing warning signs at suitable locations. Mine awareness programmes in the relevant locations have also been conducted at the village level.
- Media representatives have been briefed by the Army to disseminate information on the preventive measures required to prevent civilian casualties resulting from exercises or operations.

### **Mine clearance programmes**

- India's armed forces have not used mines for maintenance of law and order or in internal security situations, or even for combating terrorists and terrorist organisations, including those that have indiscriminately used improvised explosive devices and mines. The Corps of Army Engineers continues to aid civil authorities in defusing and clearing such devices.
- Whenever and wherever the army has used mines for defensive military operations, the mines have been laid within fenced perimeters and marked, in accordance with the requirements specified in Amended Protocol-II. Post-operations, these mines have been cleared by trained troops and arable land handed back to the owners at the earliest.

### **Rehabilitation programmes**

- Whenever landmine casualties have occurred, concerted efforts have been made to rehabilitate the affected persons by providing monetary compensation, employment and assistance, including prosthetics for mine victims.

### **International cooperation for mine clearance**

- India remains committed to providing mine-related assistance under the UN umbrella. India is one of the largest contributors to the UN peacekeeping operations the world over. Cambodia, Angola and Afghanistan, where we have carried out de-mining operations, are perhaps the most heavily mined countries in the world. In Cambodia, the Indian Army had deployed de-mining supervising teams as far back as 1991. After training several de-mining platoons, de-mining of specific areas was entrusted to these teams, resulting in hundreds of square kilometres of land being cleared of mines. Our training effort towards this end continues even today. In Angola, the Indian Army had undertaken large-scale de-mining operations under the UN umbrella in 1995. More recently, in connection with the Indian Government's programme of constructing a road in the heavily mined south-western part of Afghanistan, from Zaranj to Delaram, we have undertaken a de-mining operation since December 2005, which is very nearly done, and the road construction now is in full swing.

### **Technical cooperation and assistance**

- India has been a ready provider of technical assistance and expertise for mine clearance and rehabilitation programmes in international de-mining efforts. Besides contributing to participating in national, regional and international workshops and seminars, an Indian Army team imparted training to the Cambodian Army on de-mining operations in March 2007. Thereafter, the trained Cambodian army detachments have undertaken de-mining operations in Sudan under the aegis of UNMIS, starting from mid-2007.

India remains committed to the cause of addressing humanitarian suffering caused by certain conventional weapons, in consonance with our legitimate security concerns. The States Parties to Amended Protocol-II have undertaken modest, yet important steps in prohibiting the indiscriminate use of mines and their intentional use against civilians. In stipulating that mines, booby traps or other devices must not be targeted against civilians

or civilian objects or used indiscriminately, the Protocol effectively applies the core principles of the CCW Convention concerning the prohibition on the use of weapons that are indiscriminate and the prohibition on the use of weapons of a nature that cause unnecessary suffering or superfluous injury. We welcome the cooperative atmosphere of our discussions at the Conference and hope that the mutual exchange of technology and experience among the States Parties will help in promoting the universalization of the Protocol.