



UK Mission
Geneva

**CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS
24TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES TO
AMENDED PROTOCOL II**

AGENDA ITEM 7: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM

H.E. Mr Aidan Liddle, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 15 November 2022

Mr President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election, and assuring you of my delegation's full support.

Mines, booby-traps and improvised explosive devices can cause widespread death and destruction. They obstruct economic development long after the end of conflict. It is incumbent on all States to do all they can to limit the humanitarian impact of war, and Amended Protocol II is critical to this effort. The United Kingdom remains committed to the universalisation and full implementation of the Protocol.

We welcome the increased attention given to the use of Improvised Explosive Devices by malign actors and non-state armed groups. The proliferation, and increasing use of these munitions by terrorist and non-state actors is of serious concern, particularly given the increasing sophistication of such devices. IEDs can pose a serious threat to security, including by limiting the freedom of movement of both civilians and security forces. We thank France and Colombia for their work as IED coordinators this year.

The United Kingdom is committed to tackling such threats, and in the last year has delivered training in countering IEDs to several states, including in Asia and across Africa, with a focus on building capacity ahead of deployment on peace support operations. However, this is only treating the symptoms. We also note the importance of co-operation at the national, regional and international levels to prevent non-State actors and violent extremist organisations obtaining the components from which they could make IEDs. In that context I would like to stress the United Kingdom's support for the ongoing work of the UN Open Ended Working

Group on Conventional Ammunition. Improving the management of ammunition throughout its lifecycle will reduce opportunities for diversion and misuse. Beyond this, the United Kingdom has a long-standing commitment to mine action, and our Global Mine Action Programme continues to deliver strong progress in countering threats posed by mines and other explosive remnants of war across the world, including in Ukraine and Afghanistan.

Mr President,

This past year has reminded us that the large-scale use of mines in conventional conflict is not a thing of the past. We have seen extensive use of mines in the course of Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine. In this context it is important that we continue to draw attention to the Amended Protocol's requirements for marking and record keeping, as well as limitations on where mines can be placed. As well as limiting civilian harm in the short term, these provisions simplify post-conflict clearance. They are vital.

The United Kingdom is concerned by consistent reporting of Russia's widespread use of anti-personnel mines, even more so given that Ukraine is a party to the Ottawa Convention, and victim-activated booby traps. Reporting of the way in which these are used, including allegations of booby traps being placed on corpses, call into question Russia's compliance with its obligations under Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Mr President,

Amended Protocol II has never been so important. We must work nimbly and intelligently to ensure that we are responding to evolving threats while also working towards universal adherence to the Protocol.

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