

Philippine Delegation
Statement of H.E. Ambassador Evan P. Garcia
Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Review Conference
Geneva, Switzerland
14 November 2011

Mr. President, Excellencies, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, the Philippine Delegation would like to congratulate Ambassador Gancho Ganev for his well deserved election as President of the Review Conference of the Convention for Certain Conventional Weapons, and to also congratulate his fellow office-bearers. We appreciate Ambassador Ganev's and the Secretariat's extensive consultations made in preparation for the CCW Review Conference.

The Philippines as a State-Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) welcomes this opportunity to participate in this Review Conference and would like to reiterate its commitment to the goals and objectives of the Convention, which prohibits and restricts inhumane weapons. The CCW can truly be considered a notable achievement in the fields of disarmament and international humanitarian law.

The Philippine Delegation also wishes to express its appreciation for having the opportunity to contribute to the CCW Process through its service, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, as Chairman of the 2010 and 2011 Group of Government Experts (GGE) meetings, and as Chairman for Main Committee I (MC I) for the 4th RevCon. We would like to thank participating delegations for their active involvement in the meetings of the GGE, and in the consultations on MCI issues.

Mr. President,

The Philippines is also gratified for having the chance to share its activities, views and concerns on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) and Unexploded Ordnance (UXOs) during the expert meetings of the Convention and its Protocols since our last Review Conference. These are the categories of weapons under the umbrella of the CCW which have caused a sizeable number of deaths and injuries to both military personnel and innocent civilians in the Philippines. In our country, these weapons continue to pose a direct threat to the safety and well-being of the Filipino people. Regrettably, IEDs are emerging as the weapons of choice of terrorist groups in the Philippines inflicting casualties and immense suffering. The Philippine Government has on record numerous IED incidents which have occurred in the country.

On a positive note, we wish to cite the invaluable contribution of the United States of America in assisting the Philippine Government in the disposal by detonation of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) at Crow Valley Range, Capas, Tarlac in the first quarter of this year. His Excellency President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III personally witnessed the disposal by detonation of ERWs like mines, depth charges, bombs, anti-submarine rockets, mortars and other artillery ammunition most of which are the remnants of World War II. The ERW disposal operation was conducted in stages and in joint cooperation with the US Government.

The Philippines has also noted with interest the various proposals made and concerns raised by states during the course of previous CCW conferences and meetings. The Philippine believes that Victim Assistance should be accorded due importance. The outcomes of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (GDAVD) Third Ministerial Meeting, which was recently held in Geneva, also offers us much food for thought during this Review Conference, particularly on the impact of inhumane conventional weapons on socio-economic development in areas of conflict.

Philippine' support for the CCW

The Philippine delegation is pleased to note that the Philippine Congress has passed into law implementing legislation on International Humanitarian Law. The passage of said legislation can be considered a clear manifestation of the Philippines' support for the fundamental principles of International Humanitarian Law and is in support of the humanitarian thrust of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

As regard information dissemination on the CCW to military personnel, the AFP conducts regular trainings on Ammunition Management, Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD), the Explosive Ordinance Reconnaissance Agent Courses at the Major Services' Centers/Schools/Commands. Additionally, Ammunition Control Center and Major Services Inspection/EOD Teams nationwide.

As for the civilian populace, authorized AFP instructors (i.e. EOD personnel) conducted Bomb Threat Awareness, Procedures Trainings, and Seminars to the private sector particularly to security agencies' personnel and employees of private establishments.

Mr. President,

I wish to acknowledge the important contributions of the Department of National Defense and Armed Forces of the Philippines for having served as the focal point for the CCW and other Conventional Disarmament Agreements in my country.

We look forward to forging closer links with counterpart focal points in other states and organizations during the course of the Review Conference. The Philippines also wishes to thank the Sponsorship Committee and its participating States-Parties for its invaluable support. My country's delegations to this and other CCW conferences have been able to benefit from its provisions of assistance.

Mr. President, the Philippine Delegation wishes to pledge its full support to you and the Bureau for the successful outcome of this Review Conference.

Thank you.