
Sixth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties 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

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Items 12 and 13 of the agenda

Review of the scope and operation of the Convention and its annexed protocols

Consideration of any proposal for the Convention and its existing Protocols

Report of the Implementation Support Unit

Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit*

I. Introduction

1. The implementation Support Unit (ISU) was established by the 2009 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).¹ The Unit is located in the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), which supports the ISU through a range of services which include, financial, logistical, administrative and personnel management. The Branch also facilitates the ISU's compliance with United Nations rules and regulations to enhance its effective functioning. The Branch is instrumental in coordinating and liaising with the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)'s relevant services supporting the organization of CCW meetings and conferences.

2. The 2018 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW “decided to request UNODA to provide temporary staff support to the ISU to provide support to CCW activities and services in 2019, provided sufficient funding exists and without prejudice to future staffing arrangements of the ISU.”² In accordance with this decision and available funding, the ISU has been partially staffed by a P-3 on a temporary basis since May 2019.

3. The 2019 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW requested the ISU to report annually on its activities, including on its estimated costs and actual costs.³ This report summarizes the activities of the CCW Implementation Support Unit (ISU) from 1 January to 13 December 2021. The 2021 estimated costs of the ISU are contained in Annex IV of the “Technical Decisions by the High Contracting Parties 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 on the work related to the Convention for 2021” (CCW/2020/1), while the actual costs are made available on the [financial website](#).

II. Support for the closure of the 2020 period

4. Due to restrictions on in-person meetings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Meeting of High Contracting Parties, the Fourteenth Conference of Protocol V and the

* The present report was submitted after the deadline owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

¹ Final report, CCW/MSP/2009/5, paragraphs 34 to 37.

² CCW/MSP/2018/11, paragraph 39.

³ CCW/MSP/2019/9, paragraph 43.



Twenty-Second Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II, originally scheduled to take place in November 2020, could not be held. The Implementation Support Unit provided procedural guidance, as well as technical and logistical support to the 2020 officeholders, in close coordination with the relevant UNOG departments. This included providing an analysis of the CCW rules of procedure and previous decisions, drafting information notes, organizing informal consultations, accompanying officeholders in their bilateral consultations, relaying in a timely manner conferencing-related information issued by UNOG and identifying possible meeting dates for 2021. The Unit also assisted officeholders in the drafting and negotiation of technical decisions of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW, Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, which served as decision documents pertaining to the 2020 period in the absence of annual conferences to adopt final reports. Furthermore, the ISU circulated official communication from officeholders to High Contracting Parties, in addition to launching and following up on several silence procedures.

5. For the November session of the 2020 Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (GGE on LAWS) that was not held, the Unit assisted the Chair in compiling inputs for, drafting and circulating his summary (CCW/GGE.1/2020/WP.7). Furthermore, The ISU liaised with and duly informed incoming officeholders for the 2021 period.

6. The ISU prepared various sets of cost estimates for CCW activities to take place in 2021 and 2022, taking into account the different conferencing needs of and scenarios for each meeting, against the backdrop of continuing uncertainties related to COVID-19. The Unit worked closely with the UNOG finance unit to allow for a swift issuance and distribution of invoices following the adoption of technical decisions and of cost estimates contained therein. The ISU also responded to queries from delegations on their status of assessed contributions throughout the reporting period, with the aim of facilitating timely payment.

III. Support for 2021 meetings

7. Due to the ongoing impacts on meetings caused by COVID-19, the ISU continued to provide support to 2021 officeholders to plan for the 2021 GGE on LAWS first session, Amended Protocol II Group of Experts and Protocol V Meeting of Experts. The Unit facilitated a coordinated approach among all four officeholders in their decision-making to put forward the postponement of the original July dates to a silence procedure and maintained regular contact with all concerned services of UNOG.

8. For the informal exchange of views on lethal autonomous weapons system, organized virtually by the Chair of the 2021 GGE on 28 June-2 July 2021, the Unit provided both substantive and logistical support, including compiling and summarizing written contributions from States, discussing the program of work and providing information to participants.

9. The ISU provided the following support to the preparation and organization of the formal sessions of the GGE on 3-13 August, 27 September-1 October and 2-8 December; the meeting of Group of Experts on Amended Protocol II (16-17 August) and the Meeting of Experts on Protocol V (18 August): assisting in the development of the agenda and organization of work, drafting and issuing communication to the High Contracting Parties, international organizations and NGOs, organizing informal consultations for delegations, drafting documents, recommending panelists, issuing submissions from States as official documents, monitoring the financial situation of the Convention and the availability of funds for the holding of meetings and briefing the officeholders and coordinators on their responsibilities and past practice.

10. In addition to the aforementioned support, the ISU assisted the Presidents of the Sixth Review Conference, the 15th Conference of Protocol V and the 23rd Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II in the following aspects: organization of informal discussions on key issues, coordination with regional groups for the nomination of officeholders, preparation of proposals to be submitted to the Review Conference, drafting of reports on the operation of the Convention, establishment and organization of work of the Committees of the Review Conference, circulation of proposals from High Contracting Parties, preparation and delivery

of messages by UN senior officials, including the Secretary-General and preparation of financial documents such as cost estimates and proposed measures to enhance the stability of the Convention and ISU support.

11. Furthermore, the ISU assisted the Chair of the 2020 Meeting of High Contracting Parties in the preparation of the General Assembly resolution on the CCW, adopted without a vote on 6 December 2021 and to be issued as A/RES/76/64.

IV. Communication with and reporting by the High Contracting Parties

12. The main means of communicating information to the High Contracting Parties, international organizations and non-governmental organizations are through e-mail messages and the [UNODA website](#). The ISU updates its mailing list and the CCW webpages on a regular basis. In addition, the Unit manages the [national annual reports database](#) on compliance, Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, as well as a restricted webpage for voluntary responses to the IED questionnaire. Financial information on the Convention, including the status of contributions to the Working Capital Fund, is available on the [Dashboard](#) and the respected webpage.

13. The ISU supported the Presidents of the Review Conference and the annual conferences of the two Protocols in their efforts to increase the rate of submission of national annual reports on compliance, Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, especially by issuing a letter in this regard. The Unit also briefed the High Contracting Parties on the reporting rates, including at the Amended Protocol II Group of Experts meeting and the Protocol V Meeting of Experts, received and classified national annual reports, posted the reports on the corresponding UNODA database and responded to inquiries on national reporting.

V. Outreach, coordination and other activities

14. The ISU engages in regular communication with States not yet party to the CCW, international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and the press to raise awareness of and provide information on the activities of the Convention.

15. The Unit worked closely with the European Union for the drafting, negotiation and adoption of the Council decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 in support of the CCW, focused on Review Conference preparation and follow-up, universalization and emerging and cross-cutting issues of relevance to the Convention.

16. The ISU contributed to the development of educational material on the CCW by the UNODA office in Vienna and the NATO School Oberammergau.

17. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the CCW, the ISU organized a webinar on the evolution of and the way forward for the Convention in collaboration with the Swedish Defense College. The webinar heard panel discussions by several leading experts in the area of emerging technology, demining, gender in armed conflict and other issues related to the Convention and was attended by around 130 participants. This event followed the messages by the Secretary-General and the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs to mark the occasion in October 2020.

18. The ISU takes part in the regular meetings of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) and briefs the Group on developments related to Amended Protocol II and Protocol V.