

# Meeting 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

15 November 2024

English only

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**Geneva, 13-15 November 2024**

Agenda item 7

General exchange of views

## Working Paper\*

### Submitted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)<sup>1</sup>

1. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is anchored on the foundational principle of protection of civilians against the effects of hostilities. It also confirms that, even when not covered under the Convention, the civilian population remains under the protection and authority of the principles of international law. The right of parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited.
2. We condemn the genocidal acts by Israel, the illegal occupying power, against Palestine and its aggression in Lebanon.
3. It is evident from the devastating situation unfolding that legal commitments and political pledges have been disregarded. We witness blatant aggression and acts of genocide against the Palestinian people, brutal massacres in the besieged Gaza Strip, targeting of densely populated areas and civilian objects, including hospitals, places of worship, refugee camps, schools and civilians shelter, as well as the premises of UNRWA.
4. The double standards of some countries are on full display as they support the illegal colonial occupation in carrying out this genocide through uninterrupted flow of arms and ammunition. These countries know fully well that their supplies are used in contravention of international humanitarian law.
5. The results are obvious, and statistics are beyond alarming. The illegal occupying power has dropped explosives equivalent to three nuclear bombs on the Gaza Strip. This has resulted in the killing of 45,000 civilians and injuries to over 85,000 civilians, including a significant number of children and women. The bombing has so far left approximately 39 million tons of rubble in a region that is no more than 41 kilometers in length, which indicates a large quantity of unexploded ordnance still buried under the rubble.
6. OIC strongly condemns continued crimes committed by the illegal occupying power against the State of Palestine and urges for holding it fully responsible for the immense loss of life, human suffering, and material damage and all violations of international law.
7. OIC condemns the ongoing attacks on Lebanon, which have resulted in thousands of civilian casualties, including children, women, the elderly, and medical personnel, and displacement of over one million people due to destruction that turned entire cities and villages into rubble. OIC emphasizes the urgent need to immediately halt the aggression as it gravely undermines regional stability.
8. The explosions of communication devices in Lebanon, without regard to the location, identity, or status of their possessors, are not only acts of indiscriminate violence but are also

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

<sup>1</sup> All OIC States except Albania.



clear violations of international law. Attacks using “other devices”, as defined in the Amended Protocol II, in the form of apparently harmless portable objects which are specifically designed and constructed to contain explosive material, are prohibited under Article 7 of the Amended Protocol II and must be condemned.

9. The High Contracting Parties must also strongly denounce the use of white phosphorus by Israel, the illegal occupying power, in areas of high concentration of civilians in illegally occupied Gaza and Lebanon. The targeted use of white phosphorus in such areas with the result and primary design of causing burn injuries to persons makes it an incendiary weapon for the purposes of Protocol III.

10. Some international reports revealed that the illegal occupying power has used autonomous weapons systems (Gospel, Lavender etc) with artificial intelligence capabilities to accelerate its ongoing genocidal acts against Palestinians. These flawed weapon systems have resulted in significant increase in losses of civilian and civilian infrastructure.

11. In this regard, the OIC expresses its deep concern over the challenges posed by the lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS). Fully autonomous weapon systems raise ethical, legal, moral, and technical questions and bear serious implications for international peace and security, which must be examined in the context of compliance with international law.

12. The OIC calls on the GGE LAWS to fulfill its mandate as early as possible.

13. The CCW and its Protocols were negotiated to mitigate the suffering and harm caused by certain conventional weapons and ensure protection of civilians during armed conflicts and strengthen the rules of war.

14. We urge High Contracting Parties to uphold the resolve they demonstrated during negotiations and end the suffering in Palestine and Lebanon.

15. Inaction by the international community has only further emboldened the aggressor. The continuation of these attacks and international crimes, and the failure to comply with international law lies at the core of this crisis.

16. OIC reiterates its call for immediate cessation of genocidal acts in Palestine and aggression in Lebanon, suspension of military cooperation with the occupying power, and immediate de-escalation.

17. Impunity to violate international law is a growing threat to the sanctity of international rule of law itself. Decisive actions are urgently needed to stop this dangerous trajectory, to end impunity and to ensure accountability for all violations of international law, in particular the CCW and its Protocols, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and all relevant instruments and UN resolutions.

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