

73rd UNGA

**First Committee
Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons**

INDIA STATEMENT

By

**Ms. Nidhi Tewari
Under Secretary
Disarmament & International Security Affairs Division
Ministry of External Affairs**

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Mr. Chairman,

1. India associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the NAM.
2. India shares concerns about the challenges posed by transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons to terrorists and non-State actors, which today has become a major threat to international peace and security and an impediment to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. India remains committed to the CCW and its Annexed Protocols as well as the humanitarian principles that they embody. We believe that the universality of the CCW remains critical for the success of the Convention and its Annexed Protocols. We note with satisfaction the steady progress with the number of High Contracting Parties rising to 125. We welcome the accession of Afghanistan and Lebanon to the CCW and Benin to its Amended Article 1. India supports the Plan of Action on Universalization as well as the Sponsorship Programme, and has made regular financial contributions to it over the last few years. India has also regularly submitted its Annual Report on Compliance every year since 2008. We remain

concerned about the current financial status of the CCW, call on all States to make their financial contributions in time and welcome the efforts being undertaken by the Chair to ensure predictability and sustainability in the Convention's finances.

4. In collaboration with the ICRC, India hosted an International Conference on the CCW in New Delhi in December 2017. This was the first Conference focused on the CCW to be held in Asia in the last decade. The goal of the Conference was to further understanding of the scope and content of the CCW with the aim of facilitating increased adherence to the Convention and to discuss current issues on its agenda. The Conference drew more than 83 participants from 24 States covering Asia, the Gulf region and East Africa, as well as experts from international organizations. A range of legal, military and humanitarian perspectives were deliberated, including the impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War, CCW's work on IEDs, Anti-Vehicle Mines, Incendiary Weapons and LAWS.

5. We are pleased that the 2018 session of the GGE on LAWS, under the chairmanship of India, was successful in adopting its report by consensus, including the Emerging Commonalities, Conclusions and Recommendations. The Possible Guiding Principles reiterate that IHL continues to apply fully to all weapons systems, including the potential development and use of lethal autonomous weapons systems. We remain convinced that the CCW is the relevant forum to address this issue, not least because of the fine balance the Convention seeks to strike between humanitarian concerns and military necessity but also because it provides a dynamic and adaptive platform bringing together multiple stake-holders. Further, we believe that addressing this issue within the framework of the CCW strengthens the Convention and underlines that it is capable of responding meaningfully to evolving new technologies applicable to armed conflict in the 21st century. We support continuation of the GGE on LAWS, adequate financial resources and the participation of all stakeholders for taking forward this important subject within the CCW context.

6. We welcome the adoption of the outcome document of the Third Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons held in New York in June this year.

7. India supports the UN Register on Conventional Arms and the UN Report on Military Expenditures and has submitted its national reports regularly.

8. India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines. India supports the approach enshrined in the Amended Protocol II of the CCW which addresses legitimate defence requirements of States with long borders. India participated as an Observer at the 16th Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC in Vienna in 2017 and looks forward to the 17th Meeting in Geneva under the chairmanship of Afghanistan later this year.

9. India has strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons which conform to the highest international standards and remains committed to preventing illegal transfer of conventional weapons.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
