

**MEETING OF THE STATES 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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Geneva, 12 and 13 December 2002

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 12 December 2002, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chair: Mr. ROMÁN-MOREY (Deputy Secretary-General of the  
Conference on Disarmament)

Chair: Mr. SOOD (India)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING (item 1 of the provisional agenda)

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIR declared open the Meeting of the States 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 (the “Convention on Conventional Weapons”), which States parties to the Convention had agreed, at their Second Review Conference, to hold back-to-back with the Fourth Annual Conference of the States Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF THE RULES OF THE MEETING (item 2 of the provisional agenda)

2. The TEMPORARY CHAIR recalled that the Second Review Conference had decided to nominate Mr. Sood (India) as the Chair designate of the Meeting of States Parties. He took it that the Meeting wished to confirm Mr. Sood in that office.

3. Mr. Sood (India) was elected Chair of the Meeting by acclamation.

4. Mr. Sood (India) took the Chair.

5. The CHAIR, noting that the Meeting of States Parties was a new departure for the States parties to the Convention, thanked delegations for their cooperation during his time as Chair designate and paid tribute, in particular, to the two coordinators, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Kolarov, who had chaired the meetings of the working groups of the Group of Governmental Experts.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 3 of the provisional agenda) (CCW/MSP/2002/1)

6. The CHAIR suggested that item 11 of the provisional agenda, which had been drawn up in close consultation with the regional group coordinators and the delegation of China, should be renamed “Adoption of the report”, as it would not be merely a procedural report but would also contain substantive decisions on the future work of the States parties to the Convention.

7. The agenda, as amended, was adopted.

CONFIRMATION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (agenda item 4)  
(CCW/CONF.II/PC.1/1)

8. The CHAIR recalled that the Second Review Conference had determined that its rules of procedure would apply to the Meeting of States Parties. It was his understanding that that decision also covered the statement by the President of the Review Conference concerning rule 34 of the rules of procedure, which reaffirmed that, in the deliberations and negotiations relating to the Convention and its protocols, high contracting parties proceeded on the basis of consensus and no decisions were taken by vote. While it was clear that some of those rules, such as those on the establishment of the main committees, were not relevant to the current meeting, he suggested that the Meeting should adopt the rules and deal with any problems that arose on

the basis of common sense and a spirit of cooperation. On that understanding, he took it that the Meeting wished to conduct its work in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Second Review Conference.

9. It was so decided.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE MEETING (agenda item 5)

10. The CHAIR said his informal consultations had indicated that there was agreement to appoint Mr. Vladimir Bogomolov, Political Affairs Officer in the Geneva Branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, as Secretary-General of the Meeting. He took it that it was the wish of the Meeting to confirm Mr. Bogomolov in that office.

11. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS (agenda item 6)

12. The CHAIR said that, given the short duration of the Meeting of States Parties, it had been agreed with the regional group coordinators and the delegation of China to have a streamlined bureau consisting of the Chair, regional group coordinators and the two working group coordinators, on the understanding that such a procedure would not constitute a precedent for future meetings of States parties. He took it that the Meeting agreed to that composition of the Bureau.

13. It was so decided.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS (agenda item 7)

14. Mr. ROMÁN-MOREY (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament) read out a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in which the Secretary-General said that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons had remained deeply relevant to States and peoples alike since it was signed in 1980, as the humanitarian principles it embodied were timeless and unaffected by technological changes, strategic realignments or new ways of waging war. The Convention was a living instrument that could be adjusted and updated to keep abreast of new developments. He was pleased that the States parties to the Convention had so far succeeded in doing just that, notably during the milestone Second Review Conference a year earlier. The expansion of the Convention to cover not only conflicts of an international nature but also internal armed conflicts was a timely and warranted step in the right direction. Efforts to reinforce the international norm established by the Convention, namely with regard to explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines, were currently evident in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts. The meetings of the Group provided the necessary forum for States parties to address the military, technical and economic complexities involved. With regard to mines other than anti-personnel mines, the wealth of material on the negotiating table provided the foundation for a consensus that reflected the interests and concerns of an absolute majority of States.

15. The Convention not only saved lives and reduced suffering but also protected the security interests of States parties without imposing any significant economic burden on them. It was therefore unfortunate that there were still only 89 States parties to the Convention. He urged the Meeting of States Parties to consider taking practical steps that would encourage more accessions in the near future and also to ensure that the Convention remained strong, healthy and effective at the outset of its third decade of operation.

ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING (agenda item 8)  
(CCW/CONF.II/2)

16. The CHAIR said that the Second Review Conference had approved the cost estimates for the 2002 Meeting of States Parties, as contained on pages 46 and 47 of document CCW/CONF.II/2. He had been informed by the secretariat that significant savings had been made during the preparations for the meeting as a result of reductions in the amount of documentation prepared. It was therefore to be expected that the eventual cost of the meeting would be less than originally estimated, although the actual figures would only be available at the end of the meeting. He took it that the Meeting of States Parties wished to adopt those estimated costs.

17. It was so decided.

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS (agenda item 9) (CCW/GGE/I/2, CCW/GGE/II/1 and CCW/GGE/III/1)

18. The CHAIR said that a complete report on the work of the Governmental Group of Experts could be found in documents CCW/GGE/I/2, CCW/GGE/II/1 and CCW/GGE/III/1. The last-mentioned document also contained a list of all the working papers that had formed, along with the contributions by delegations, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the basis for the Group's deliberations. The same document also contained recommendations for future work on explosive remnants of war, mines other than anti-personnel mines, compliance with the Convention and its protocols and related issues.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS AND GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (agenda item 10)

19. Mr. SMITH (Australia) expressed confidence that the work of the Group of Governmental Experts would have a real impact on addressing the urgent humanitarian needs created by explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines. His delegation fully endorsed the mandates contained in the report on the Group's work and was ready to begin negotiations on post-conflict remedial measures to address the humanitarian problems caused by explosive remnants of war, preferably in the form of a legally binding protocol to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

20. Noting that his delegation would have preferred to enter immediately into negotiations on the issue of mines other than anti-personnel mines, he said it would continue to play an active role in the discussions on that issue and also on possible compliance mechanisms to enhance the effective implementation of the Convention. He announced that Australia had ratified the amendment to article 1 of the Convention, which extended its scope to non-international armed conflicts, and urged all States parties that had not yet done so to ratify it as soon as possible.

21. Ms. GABR (Observer from Egypt) said that the presence of explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines had serious economic and social consequences for the countries of northern Africa and for developing countries in general, which did not have the financial, technical or human resources needed to rid their territories of such devices. In Egypt, where they accounted for 75 per cent of all the explosive devices found, they made it difficult to exploit natural resources properly and took a serious toll in human lives. To address the problem, her Government had set up a national committee to collect information on the areas affected and to produce a policy that reconciled humanitarian considerations with the priorities of the national development plan. She stressed the importance of the principle whereby the country responsible for the presence of explosive remnants of war was also responsible for clearing them up and for providing the necessary technical assistance and the need to attach to the Convention a binding instrument to deal with the problem of such remnants. In that context, she paid tribute to the United Nations for its mine-clearance efforts and the assistance provided through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action.

22. Mr. UMER (Pakistan) said that he saw the mandate recommended by the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War (CCW/GGE/III/1, annex II) in terms of declining degrees of compulsion, ranging from negotiations on a binding legal instrument to the discussions on possible preventive measures. He fully endorsed the recommendation to negotiate an instrument dealing with post-conflict remedial measures to reduce the risks of explosive remnants of war, but he was disappointed that there was no mention of victim assistance in paragraph 1 (a) of the Working Group's recommendations and his delegation would be happy to present a proposal to rectify that omission. He believed that clear distinction must be made between post-conflict measures and pre-conflict measures such as the examination of voluntary best practices to improve the reliability of the munitions that fell within the agreed definition of explosive remnants of war. Possible preventive measures aimed at improving the design of certain types of munitions should be seen as part of the overall educative process.

23. Pakistan supported the essentially exploratory mandate recommended by the Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (CCW/GGE/III/1, annex III), as, in its view, a legal instrument was not needed to deal with that category of mines: he knew of no humanitarian fallout from such mines and they were an important part of many countries' national security arrangements. He stressed that the Convention on Conventional Weapons had been successful because it was pragmatic and did not ignore legitimate security concerns. In the interests of maintaining the cooperative spirit that had characterized the work relating to the Convention, no attempt should be made to push through premature proposals on which there was no conceptual agreement.

24. Lastly, he said that States parties, as they moved towards the adoption of additional legal obligations, should be mindful of the fact that less than half of the Member States of the United Nations were parties to the Convention. As the effectiveness of the Convention depended largely on its degree of universality, efforts should be stepped up to encourage more States to become parties to it.

25. Mr. SHA Zukang (China) said that the mandates of the two working groups must take into account the security concerns of countries around the world, as well as humanitarian concerns. Noting the high level of cooperation among States parties, which had helped promote the universality and effectiveness of the Convention on Conventional Weapons, he said that the amendment to article 1, which extended its scope to non-international armed conflicts, would significantly enhance that effectiveness. His Government was actively considering the possibility of ratifying that amendment, which he hoped would enter into force at an early date.

26. In its work on explosive remnants of war, the Governmental Group of Experts should take two important aspects into consideration: first, the need to clear existing explosive remnants of war and, second, the need to avoid creating new ones. To that end, a balance needed to be struck between the legitimate defence needs of sovereign States and humanitarian concerns, while taking due account of the varying economic and technological capacities of countries to deal with the problem. The most effective way forward therefore would be to establish general principles that were universally applicable to munitions likely to produce explosive remnants of war, such as the principle of the user's responsibility for clearance, and to take steps to improve the reliability of munitions. On the whole, the recommendation of the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War was practical and reflected the views of all States parties in a balanced manner.

27. While anti-vehicle landmines had caused certain humanitarian problems, such mines were effective defensive weapons for many developing countries. In China's view, the issues involved had already been resolved by the adoption of Amended Protocol II and there was therefore no need for the Governmental Group of Experts to discuss it further. His delegation was not satisfied with the recommendation submitted by the Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines, but was prepared to continue discussing the issue in the light of the interest shown in it by other States parties. His delegation was also ready to cooperate in efforts further to enhance the universality and effectiveness of the Convention and to promote its role in international arms control and in meeting humanitarian concerns.

28. Mr. INOUCHI (Japan) said that the unique feature of the Convention, in that it allowed States parties to address humanitarian problems caused by certain conventional weapons without compromising legitimate security requirements, rendered it acceptable to a wide range of States, including those with large conventional arsenals and Japan therefore hoped that it would be further strengthened by wider adherence and full compliance by its States parties. In addition, the Convention had proved flexible enough to respond to emerging humanitarian concerns caused by non-international conflicts, through the amendment to its article 1, and Japan was currently preparing to ratify that amendment.

29. Japan believed that the Group of Governmental Experts was the most appropriate forum to deal with the issue of the humanitarian risks and social and economic problems associated with mines other than anti-personnel mines. It believed that a protocol should be negotiated on such mines and favoured the 12-nation proposal as the most practical and effective approach.

30. Japan supported the initiative taken by the delegation of Germany regarding anti-vehicle mines equipped with certain sensitive fuzes and also commended the Group of Governmental Experts on agreeing on a negotiating mandate on explosive remnants of war. Finally, while Japan supported the creation of a compliance mechanism, it stressed that it should not place an excessive financial burden on States parties and looked forward to further progress on the issue, based on the three proposals that had been put forward.

31. Mr. LEVY (Israel) said that the agreement reached by the Group of Governmental Experts on its mandates for 2003 reflected both the flexibility of the States parties and their determination to pursue important work on humanitarian issues. In that context, Israel stressed that threats to society were posed not by armaments in themselves but by the dangerous combination of mistrust, massive rearmament and the presence of irresponsible elements with access to sophisticated weaponry. Accordingly, the creation of an environment of dialogue, confidence and trust should be an overriding objective.

32. Notwithstanding its serious security concerns, Israel had decided to accept the constraints imposed by the Convention on Conventional Weapons. In addition, it had recently ratified Amended Protocol II and Protocol IV, had ceased the production of all anti-personnel mines and had placed a moratorium on the export of such mines.

33. With a view to promoting the universality of the Convention and its protocols, Israel favoured the voluntary character of measures, such as those suggested in the mandate on explosive remnants of war, which would enable countries in its region, not yet signatories, to apply those measures as a confidence-building step. With regard to the transfer of certain conventional weapons, the Conference should send a strong message to States to combat global terrorism by tightening export controls on arms and their components and on ammunition.

34. In its conviction that the Convention enabled States to exercise self-restraint in the use of arms without compromising their vital national security interests, Israel was committed to finding the proper balance between the legitimate security needs of States and the moral imperative to reduce human suffering. Finally, Israel regarded compliance as an essential confidence and security-building measure among the States parties to arms control agreements, particularly at the bilateral level, where it supported the idea of voluntary mutual verification activities.

35. Mr. CHUNG Eui-yong (Republic of Korea) said that the Convention on Conventional Weapons had an important role to play in giving effect to the principles of international humanitarian law and his country therefore supported recent decisions to keep the Convention relevant to modern conflicts, such as the amendment of article 1 of the Convention, to cover non-international armed conflicts, which his country expected to ratify in the very near future.



36. It also welcomed the mandate accorded to the Group of Governmental Experts on explosive remnants of war, which provided for a balanced approach without prejudging the outcome, and the mandate on mines other than anti-personnel mines, which could provide the momentum for negotiations for a new instrument on such mines. With regard to the addition of a compliance mechanism to the Convention framework, the Republic of Korea supported the basic thinking behind the existing three proposals and looked forward to continuing discussion on the issue.

37. Mr. IVERSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union, namely, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and in addition, Cyprus and Malta, also associated with the European Union, said that the Union attached great importance to the Convention on Conventional Weapons in its regulations, given its two-fold purpose of protecting civilians from weapons that caused particular humanitarian sufferings and protecting soldiers and combatants from weapons that were unnecessarily harmful. The European Union particularly welcomed the extension of the scope of the Convention to non-international armed conflicts and urged all States parties to adhere to the amended article 1, as well as to any protocols to the Convention to which they were not yet parties. It also urged all States not yet party to the Convention itself also to adhere to it and to its protocols.

38. The European Union also attached importance to the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts, to consider the issue of explosive remnants of war, given the enormous scale of that problem. Unexploded remnants of war caused numerous deaths and injuries every year, hindered the return of conflict-stricken areas to normal peaceful use, forced civilians to take unacceptable risks, that were often linked to poverty, and impeded humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping efforts, post-conflict reconstruction and development in general. As it had long campaigned for a legally binding instrument within the Convention framework on explosive remnants of war, the European Union welcomed agreement by the Group on a mandate to start negotiations on such an instrument in 2003. While it would have supported a more ambitious mandate, covering post-conflict remedial measures as well as preventive measures to improve the reliability and design of munitions, as in particular submunitions, the Union believed that the Group's recommendations still offered a good compromise and hoped that the States parties would endorse the proposed mandate.

39. With regard to anti-vehicle mines, the European Union remained concerned about the continuing reported humanitarian consequences of the use of such mines and evidence that the presence of anti-vehicle mines might also pose problems to countries' own and their allies' current and future military ground operations. Accordingly, the Union welcomed agreement by the Group to continue exploring the issue of anti-vehicle mines, including the possibility of a negotiating mandate for a new instrument. Here too the European Union would have preferred a more ambitious mandate, to start negotiations in 2003 on a protocol covering appropriate technical and other measures, but believed that the Group's recommendations on anti-vehicle mines offered a reasonable compromise between the different views expressed on the issue. Accordingly, it hoped that States parties would endorse the mandate on anti-vehicle mines as well. Finally, he reiterated the wish of the European Union for an efficient mechanism to ensure compliance by States parties with the Convention and its four protocols.

40. Mr. CAUGHLEY (New Zealand) said, with reference to the outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts, that New Zealand would have preferred a bolder text that took account of military realities but was forward-looking in addressing the many humanitarian concerns raised by explosive remnants of war and anti-vehicle mines, in particular, including a negotiating mandate dealing with the impact of submunitions on civilians, an issue which had been under discussion for two years and was now ready to be included in negotiations. New Zealand was, however, gratified that information and warning considerations had been included in the draft mandate on explosive remnants of war and believed that voluntary measures that could be employed quickly offered the most effective means of ensuring that States took responsibility for clearance.

41. From its own peacekeepers' experience, New Zealand knew the hazards posed by anti-vehicle mines to civilians, humanitarian operations and peacekeeping forces and it therefore welcomed the contributions on such mines by other States, in particular Ireland. While it supported the draft mandate recommended by the Group of Governmental Experts, here to it would have preferred a text that was bolder in its scope.

42. Where explosive remnants of war were concerned, the issue of international humanitarian law remained central to efforts to deal with the issue and New Zealand was therefore pleased that the draft mandate on the issue now contained a reference to such law. It also commended current work conducted in that area by ICRC and concerned non-governmental organizations.

43. Ms. POLLACK (Canada) said that, while Canada welcomed the recommendation by the Governmental Group of Experts on a mandate regarding the explosive remnants of war and looked forward to discussions on all aspects of post-conflict remedial measures, it strongly believed that victim assistance must form an integral part of such discussions. Given the urgency and severity of the problem of explosive remnants of war, it hoped that those negotiations could be completed in time for adoption of a legally binding instrument at the next meeting of States parties in 2003. Canada also believed that, while existing provisions of international humanitarian law adequately covered the issues of planning, use and targeting, there was need to discuss how the existing rules and principles of such law were applied in practice.

44. Given the significant human threat posed by mines other than anti-personnel mines, which hindered the work of relief organizations, frustrated the return of refugees, hampered economic development and killed and injured civilians and peacekeepers, Canada welcomed the many ideas put forward by the Group of Governmental Experts and hoped that States parties would reach agreement by the next meeting of the States parties, in 2003, on a similarly broad and flexible negotiating mandate for a new legally binding instrument on such mines.

45. Noting the valuable contributions to the Convention process by States parties, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, she underlined the importance of continued active participation by all three of those groups in future work under the Convention. Finally, given the importance of the Convention as a component of international humanitarian law and its contribution to joint efforts to reduce humanitarian suffering, she

encouraged all States parties which had not yet done so to accept the amendment extending its scope to non-international conflicts: apart from Canada, only four other States has thus far accepted the amendment.

46. Mr. VALLE FONROUGE (Argentina) said that, in the interests of promoting international humanitarian law, Argentina was deeply concerned that there should be universal adherence to the Convention and its protocols and had itself embarked on ratification of amended article 1 of the Convention, which extended its scope to non-international armed conflicts, and encouraged other States which had not yet done so to follow suit.

47. He expressed his country's support for the negotiating mandates prepared by the Group of Governmental Experts and for the preparation of a new legally binding instrument on explosive remnants of war, to include both preventive and remedial measures and covering humanitarian, technical, military and legal aspects of the problem. While accepting the legitimate military use of mines other than anti-personnel mines, Argentina favoured the adoption of remedial measures to reduce the risks of their irresponsible deployment. Finally, it also strongly favoured the adoption of verification and compliance measures, which the Convention lacked, but stressed that such measures should not impose an excessive financial burden on States parties.

48. Mr. KOEFFLER (Austria) said that Austria fully aligned itself with the statement made by Denmark on behalf of the European Union and would have preferred a stronger mandate for the follow-up process on explosive remnants of war. In Austria's view, the follow-up process must include the negotiation of a legally binding instrument; that negotiation must not be linked with progress on other topics and, given the need for urgent action to address the problem of explosive remnants of war, generic remedial measures should be agreed on promptly. In addition, the issue of victim assistance must be one of the main focuses of negotiations in 2003 and the term "post-conflict" must be taken to mean that all agreed actions and measures must be taken at the earliest possible moment after the cessation of acts of hostility.

49. With regard to the second point of the mandate on explosive remnants of war Austria hoped that agreement would swiftly be reached on the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on preventive measures to reduce the risk of munitions becoming explosive remnants of war and, in that context, looked forward to discussions on the scope and application of international humanitarian law. Finally, Austria stressed the importance of the continued participation of civil society in that process.

50. Mr. JAKUBOWSKI (Poland), after endorsing the statement made on behalf of the European Union, said his country fully supported the decision of the 2001 review conference that the Convention and its protocols should apply in non-international armed conflicts. Citing Poland's experience with the explosive remnants of war, which continued to constitute a problem 50 years after the end of the conflict, he offered to share expertise in the field of clearance with all those who might find it useful.

51. Poland welcomed the initiatives on mines other than anti-personnel mines and on unexploded remnants of war, which were timely and complemented one another. Poland had also decided to take part in the work of the team of technical experts pursuant to the Swiss initiative on small-calibre weapons. All such activities would contribute to the process of continuous evaluation and development of the Convention, to which he hoped specifically targeted instruments would be added in the near future.

52. Mr. HEDBERG (Sweden) expressed support for the statement made by the representative of Denmark and added that on 3 December his country had deposited its instrument of ratification concerning amended article 1 of the Convention.

53. Mr. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) said that, while in 2002 the Group of Governmental Experts had accomplished useful work and produced agreed decisions on explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines, the decisions were not perfect. The twin-track approach to the former issue was complex and hard to apply, though his delegation had not wished to oppose the consensus on the matter. It had also supported the mandate on the latter issue, but considered that additional work was needed before initiating research on the questions set out in the mandate.

54. Mr. FAESSLER (Switzerland) welcomed the results achieved by the Group of Governmental Experts, notably in relation to the effective implementation of the Convention and its protocols, and supported the mandate proposed in connection with explosive remnants of war, even though it was less ambitious than might have been wished. Any future instrument on the subject should contain a broad and general definition of such remnants, should provide for its application to both international and non-international armed conflicts and should incorporate a general obligation both to remove such debris and to provide the civilian population with full information. A provision on assistance and cooperation, and on consultation machinery, was also needed.

55. He emphasized the importance that Switzerland attached to preventive measures of a technical nature, especially in relation to submunitions. It would also have liked to see the inclusion of a reference to international humanitarian law in the mandate, and consideration of whether the latest developments in such law should be taken into account.

56. The mandate recommended by the Group concerning mines other than anti-personnel mines should result in a proper level of protection in response to an important requirement in the humanitarian field. A similar requirement applied to small-calibre arms and munitions, and his country would support any initiative in that direction.

57. Ms. do VALLE PEREIRA (Brazil) congratulated the coordinators on their work on explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines. The balanced mandates which had emerged would provide a sound platform for work in 2003. It was particularly important that international assistance and cooperation were addressed in both mandates.

58. She warmly welcomed the decision to recommend the negotiation of an instrument on post-remedial measures to reduce the risks of explosive remnants of war. It was vital to address the humanitarian risks posed by such remnants through a legally binding instrument as the sole guarantee of a transparent, objective and effective regime on the matter.

59. Mr. LEON GONZALEZ (Cuba) welcomed the progress made on the two issues under discussion, which should be built on in the future. The main merit of the mandate developed on explosive remnants of war was that it emphasized generic post-conflict measures, which were easier for States to apply and could be introduced with immediate effect. The more preventive measures sought by some were not always within the means of countries whose resources were limited.

60. While Cuba considered that the humanitarian considerations relating to mines other than anti-personnel mines were properly covered in the existing provisions of the Convention and its protocols, it would be prepared to take part in further discussions, provided that no artificial deadlines were set.

61. Mr. GEVELT (Norway) said that the two new proposed mandates would permit continued deliberations on important issues and opened the way to legally binding instruments. He welcomed the clear negotiating mandate recommended on post-conflict measures, which would allow States parties to start to explore how weapons reliability could be improved. While disappointed that no negotiations had been scheduled on the humanitarian challenges caused by the irresponsible use of anti-vehicle mines, he was pleased to see that States parties had expressed a desire to study further the existing principles of international humanitarian law.

62. Norway would like to see the amendment on the scope of application of the Convention decided on by the Second Review Conference applied to the instruments on which work was planned.

63. Mr. MACEDO (Mexico) announced that on 21 November the Mexican Senate had approved the amendment to article 1 of the Convention. Mexico believed that the Convention and its protocols needed a binding international verification mechanism, which would deter violations. In an initial phase, there could be an exchange of information in connection with alleged breaches. Joint action by the international community to address the problem of explosive remnants of war was vital, and the primary role of the United Nations should be reaffirmed. The mandate now proposed constituted a step forward in that direction. As for anti-vehicle mines, efforts should be directed towards a total ban on all kinds of mines.

64. Mr. BURKE (Ireland) expressed full support for the statement made by Denmark. The extremely important and helpful work accomplished by the Group of Governmental Experts would be of great assistance in efforts to solve the humanitarian problems caused by explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines. The proposal for a generic instrument on explosive remnants of war was the best that could be achieved in present circumstances, while the second proposal was valuable in allowing for further work, though Ireland would have preferred a firm mandate to negotiate a protocol on the subject.

65. The States parties to the Convention had an obligation to regulate the design and use of problem weapons and reduce the damage caused by explosive remnants of war, and input from areas affected by explosive remnants of war would be invaluable in work towards that goal. His Government had decided to make a contribution by supporting the organization of a conference on the subject in Dublin in the first half of 2003.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.