

REVIEW CONFERENCE 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

CCW/CONF.I/SR.12  
14 May 1996

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

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Second resumed session  
Geneva, 22 April-3 May 1996

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 30 April 1996, at 5.30 p.m.

President: Mr. MOLANDER (Sweden)

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GE.96-61327 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 5.20 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSAL FOR THE CONVENTION AND ITS EXISTING PROTOCOLS  
(agenda item 14) (continued) (CCW/CONF.I/CRP.19)

1. The PRESIDENT noted that the Conference had considered the revised draft of Protocol II and the Technical Annex (CCW/CONF.I/CRP.19) at an informal meeting. He believed that the Conference wished to submit the document to the Drafting Committee and consider it again at a plenary meeting once the necessary changes had been made, pursuant to rule 36 of its rules of procedure.

2. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that his delegation, although aware of the enormous efforts that had been necessary to arrive at the text in question, could unfortunately not accept it as currently drafted. It hoped that its concerns and the proposals it had made with a view to reaching a compromise would be taken into account by the Conference.

3. The PRESIDENT pointed out that it was not necessary for texts submitted to the Drafting Committee to be final and previously agreed. As to the working method to be used by the Drafting Committee, he noted that, under article 8 of the Convention, the High Contracting Parties were entitled to propose amendments to the Convention or any annexed Protocol. Instead of making amendments to the articles of Protocol II, the States parties had chosen to review the entire regime applicable to land-mines, making extensive drafting changes and leaving only a few provisions unchanged. For that reason, with the approval of the Conference, he intended to ask the Drafting Committee to consider the revised draft of the Protocol as negotiated and as contained in document CCW/CONF.I/CRP.19 rather than undertake the difficult task of considering the amendments separately from the text.

4. If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Conference wished to submit to the Drafting Committee the revised draft of Protocol II and the Technical Annex as contained in document CCW/CONF.I/CRP.19.

5. It was so decided.

REVIEW OF THE SCOPE AND OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION AND ITS ANNEXED PROTOCOLS  
(agenda item 13) (continued) (CCW/CONF.I/WP.1/Rev.1; CCW/CONF.I/MC.I/CRP.10)

6. The PRESIDENT drew the attention of delegations to the draft Final Declaration (CCW/CONF.I/WP.1/Rev.1) and to document CCW/CONF.I/MC.I/CRP.10, containing a compilation of proposals for the draft. He invited the Chairman of Main Committee I to introduce the texts.

7. Mr. TOTH (Hungary), speaking in his capacity as Chairman of Main Committee I, said that the two documents represented the greater part of the Committee's work. Document CCW/CONF.I/WP.1/Rev.1 contained wording from the draft Final Declaration which delegations had endorsed in Vienna and during the second part of the session of the Conference. Document CCW/CONF.I/MC.I/CRP.10 contained the parts of the draft Final Declaration concerning which agreement had not yet been reached.

8. The PRESIDENT said that, in his understanding, the Conference did not intend to submit either the draft Final Declaration or the draft report to the Drafting Committee and that it preferred to consider both texts at a subsequent meeting. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Conference agreed.

9. It was so decided.

MESSAGE TO THE CONFERENCE FROM H.M. KING NORODOM SIHANOUK

10. Mr. MOULY (Observer for Cambodia), reading out a message to the Conference from H.M. King Norodom Sihanouk, said that the King paid a tribute to the leading religious and secular figures from all areas who had come to express their sincere compassion to the peoples who were the victims of land-mines. The serious problem at hand could not be solved simply by denouncing the terrible effects of the mines or demonstrating solidarity through humanitarian assistance to the survivors and bereaved families. All peoples, international organizations and Governments must take concrete measures to prohibit permanently and without delay the production, export, use and sale of mines.

11. That was unfortunately a Utopian idea as yet. Even if all countries were to decide unanimously to cease producing and exporting mines, those that continued to use them would have intact mine stocks available and would be able to acquire mines clandestinely. Some, like the Khmer rouge, even succeeded in fabricating makeshift devices that were just as lethal.

12. In the context of the continuing civil war in Cambodia, land-mines scattered throughout the territory numbered in the millions. According to the experts, there was one mine for every inhabitant. As a result, 300 people per month were killed or mutilated. Although the Cambodian Government had prohibited the use of mines, both the Khmer rouge and the royal army continued to lay mines using self-defence as a justification.

13. Since their return, the King and Queen of Cambodia had travelled extensively throughout the country to provide assistance in many forms to the disabled and the victims' families and, within the limits of the royal budget, made a modest contribution to the financing of demining activities. In a solemn statement to the United Nations General Assembly in 1991, King Norodom Sihanouk had made an appeal - with no illusions as to the immediate effects of his initiative - for the prohibition of the manufacturing and marketing of mines.

14. The United Nations provided Cambodia with assistance by agreeing to launch an emergency programme for the rapid training of Khmer specialists, and that had made it possible to form a small local demining team. Non-governmental organizations and various agencies were also working in certain sectors considered to have priority. In that connection, he commended the admirable work of the professional demining teams of the Compagnie française d'assistance spécialisée and the Mines Advisory Group, which were handling prevention, education and decontamination, but also training, in the field. They were supported downstream by teams specializing in safety, health and welfare assistance, rehabilitation and vocational training for the maimed

and disabled, support for the families and basic infrastructure work. In view of the extent of the problems, however, the efforts being made were insufficient. The deminers' task was complicated by the fact that the minefields in question had been in existence for a long time and that the devices in question had been moved by the annual flooding and current generations were no longer able to locate them. Worthy of note was the fact that the great majority of victims were women and children.

15. In view of the extent of the scourge, countries such as France, Belgium, the Philippines and Australia had taken official decisions to stop manufacturing and marketing anti-personnel land-mines. They should be thanked. The King made a solemn appeal to States that persisted in engaging in the mad land-mines race to pledge to stop immediately.

16. That concluded the message of H.M. King Norodom Sihanouk. He (Mr. Mouly) added that Cambodia was doing everything in its power to eliminate anti-personnel land-mines. Cambodian deminers continued to work tirelessly and the results were encouraging. In view of the magnitude of the problem, however, human, material and financial resources must continually be mobilized. Cambodia took the opportunity to express its profound gratitude to the international community for its support for the demining operations. For its part, the Cambodian Government was devoting larger and larger amounts to such operations. The amounts allocated to demining activities had risen from \$40,000 in 1994 to \$400,000 in 1995. The projected budget for 1996 was \$1 million. It should also be noted that demining operations were given the highest priority in the national recovery, reconstruction and development plan. In the legislative sphere, a bill on the prohibition of the use of anti-personnel land-mines was being studied by the Council of Ministers. The principle of prohibition had already been accepted with no opposition. At the international level, as a country that was the victim of anti-personnel land-mines, Cambodia was prepared to accede to the 1980 Convention and the Government had already given the Minister for Foreign Affairs instructions to that effect.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.