



Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN
GENEVA

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Statement by

Mrs. Maya Yaron, Minister - Counsellor
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Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain
Conventional Weapons (CCW)
Other Matters

United Nations, Geneva

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Mr. Chairperson,

A number of delegations raised issues relating to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Regretfully, many armed conflicts today involve hostilities that take place in urban environments, as terrorist groups intentionally exploit this environment and the civilian population. We stress the importance of compliance with IHL at all times and under all circumstances, by any actor – whether State or non-State.

Israel believes that any serious and thorough discussion on this matter should be a high-quality professional exchange, lead by military and legal experts in this specific field.

Indeed, EWIPA **has been** discussed in various forums in recent years, including an expert meeting that the ICRC held in Geneva; several significant academic conferences, such as the conferences that took place in Washington DC, San Remo and Bruges; as well as in other frameworks, such as OCHA. Israeli experts engaged in many of these meetings and initiatives, as well as in bilateral professional consultations, exchanging views on policies and legal aspects of the issue.

However, we don't see the CCW as a suitable forum for discussing this issue. The CCW deals with **certain** conventional weapons, while the use of explosive weapons in populated areas does not concern a certain type of weapon, but seems to touch upon a wide array of conventional weapons – including, in fact, virtually **all** air-delivered munitions. In other words, a discussion on EWIPA does not actually focus on weapons, but rather on the implementation of IHL in the circumstances of urban warfare.

The CCW is an ideal framework to address certain conventional weapons. It is not intended nor designed to conduct a broader discussion on compliance with IHL. A general discussion on legal and operational aspects of urban warfare is not the purpose of this forum. In order to retain the CCW's strengths, we should refrain from turning it into a forum that discusses every issue of concern regarding armed conflict, important as it may be.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.