

CCW: 2018 Meeting of High Contracting Parties

New Zealand Statement on Protocol III: Incendiary weapons

Thank you Mr Chair.

New Zealand is once again pleased to be able to discuss incendiary weapons under a dedicated agenda item on Protocol III, which we continue to see as an important component of the CCW. We urge the universalisation and full implementation of Protocol III by all States.

New Zealand engaged in the substantive debate on incendiary weapons during last year's Meeting of High Contracting Parties, outlining our approach to such weapons as contained within the New Zealand Defence Force's manual on the Law of Armed Conflict. In the interests of time I would refer delegations to New Zealand's intervention at that meeting for more detailed information on our policy and procedure.

We are of the view that Protocol III should remain on our agenda. New Zealand also remains open to the convening of an informal meeting to discuss universalisation, implementation and adequacy of Protocol III in light of the humanitarian concerns that surround incendiary weapons. These concerns have been reinforced again this year by ongoing reports of the use of incendiary weapons in the Syrian conflict, with horrific consequences for civilians. New Zealand is gravely concerned about the reports of such use and continues to condemn any use of incendiary weapons against civilians or civilian objects, and any other uses incompatible with relevant rules of IHL, including provisions of Protocol III where applicable. We are pleased to see this concern and condemnation reflected in the draft report of this meeting.

NZ disarmament statements online, www.converge.org.nz/pma/nzdist.htm