

CCW REVCON 17 NOVEMBER 2006
STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR JOHN DUNCAN ON BEHALF OF
THE UK AND FRANCE ON MOTAPM

Mr President,

I am taking the floor on behalf of France and the United Kingdom.

France and UK were among the first countries that called for the negotiation within the CCW of a specific protocol on MOTAPM beyond the provisions of APII. Our aim all along was to have a Protocol which added significant humanitarian value to existing International Humanitarian Law.

For five years we have been working in this direction in the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts and within this Review Conference. We have stated that the proposal of the 30 nations was broadly acceptable subject to the provision of a transition period.

We have expressed our support for the text of Coordinator Ambassador Reimaa in particular the last version (CCW/GGE/XII/WG.2/1/rev.2). This text remains the closest to our positions and commitments.

We have also expressed support for the work of Coordinator Ambassador Paranhos (CCW/GGE/XV/WG.2/1/Rev.2) who successfully unblocked our discussions, allowing a better understanding and increased level of agreement on the key issues.

France and the UK regret that this Review Conference was not in a position to adopt by consensus a new Protocol containing legally binding obligations with respect to Mines Other than Anti-Personel Mines (MOTAPM).

Nevertheless, France and UK will not abandon this objective. It is essential that the commitment to negotiate such a protocol in the CCW be taken here, now.

We share the concern of Denmark and other states about the humanitarian impact of these mines, and therefore also intend to take the necessary steps to adopt the practices contained within Denmark's declaration as a matter of national policy, rather than as a matter of law.

We wish to emphasise that we are not legally bound to take these steps, but as a matter of policy we intend to follow these practices, where we do not already have more stringent practices in place to protect civilians from the potential impact of these mines. We wish to recall that we need a transition

period of 15 years to comply fully with the requirements of this declaration. To this end we intend to follow the detailed requirements set out in the Reimaa II document.

France and UK wish to stress that by undertaking this commitment of cooperation and good conduct, we intend to build upon the impetus of this declaration, which we hope will lead to renewed determination to achieve consensus on a Protocol containing legally binding obligations on MOTAPM, and will add real value in the framework of the CCW. To this end we will work tirelessly next year, on the basis of the proposals made by Ambassador Parahnos, which follow on from Ambassador Reimaa's document.