

## **Press Release**

### **United Nations Regional Seminar on Promoting Universality of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Annexed Protocols in South Asia, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific**

In cooperation with the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal and with the financial support from the European Union (EU), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is organizing a regional seminar entitled “Promoting the Universality of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its annexed Protocols in South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands”. The seminar will take place in Kathmandu on 17 and 18 December 2008.

The regional seminar is aimed at supporting the universality of the CCW and its Protocols by promoting accession to the convention by States from the region that are not yet party to it and to encourage these States to initiate the necessary national processes. The seminar will serve as a forum for participants to exchange views on the benefits of adherence to the CCW, as well as the challenges of implementing its provisions. Participants will have an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned in respect of implementing the Convention. Further, the seminar will provide information on the aims and functioning of the various CCW mechanisms and tools.

The seminar will draw participants from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Vietnam. Officials and experts from (UNODA), the EU, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) will share their expertise in this area and provide information and advice on ratification and implementation of the Convention. Several regional and subregional organizations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) were also invited to attend.

The seminar is the last of six regional seminars organized by UNODA and financed by the European Union through its Joint Action (23 July 2007) in implementing the CCW Plan of Action on Promoting the Universality of CCW and its annexed Protocols. Previous seminars were held in the Caribbean region, East and West Africa, Great Lakes, Horn of Africa and Southern Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East and the Mediterranean region.

In addition to this Regional Seminar, UNICEF and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in close coordination with the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific will conduct a one day workshop on ‘International Humanitarian Law on Explosive Remnants of War’. This workshop will focus on Protocol V of the CCW and will take place on 19 December 2008 in Kathmandu.

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## **Background**

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, also known as the Inhumane Weapons Convention) was opened for signature at New York on 10 April 1981 and entered into force on 2 December 1983. It currently has 108 States Parties. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the depositary of the Convention. The Convention seeks to protect civilians and combatants from the effects of specific weapons used in armed conflict. It consists of a framework instrument (the Convention) and five protocols each of them regulating a category of weapons.

For more information pertaining to the CCW, please contact [ccw@unog.ch](mailto:ccw@unog.ch) or consult the official website of the CCW at: <http://www.unog.ch/ccw> .

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