

**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States  
Ms. Simona Popan, Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to the  
United Nations**

**at the Sixth Committee**

**on the Agenda item 81:**

**" Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and  
relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts "**

**United Nations**

**New York**

**17 October 2022**

**±CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY ±**

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries North Macedonia , Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EFTA country Liechtenstein, as well as Georgia and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

Mr./Madam Chair,

Even war has rules

On August 12, 1949 - after the horrors of two world wars - the Four Geneva Conventions were signed to establish rules for wars. The Four Geneva Conventions are universally ratified. But the two additional Protocols adopted in 1977 to formulate more robust protection for victims of international and non-international armed conflicts, are not yet universally ratified.

We welcome that 174 States are party to Additional Protocol I and 169 States to Additional Protocol II, which still places the Additional Protocols amongst the world's most widely ratified legal instruments. We call on all remaining States that value our shared humanity to ratify the Protocols. We also stress that most rules contained in the 1977 Additional Protocols have gained the status of customary international law.

Mr./Madam Chair,

The EU is deeply concerned by the pervasiveness of armed conflicts across the globe, which cause immense suffering to millions of civilians. Aggression against Ukraine, which has brought dramatic consequences for the civilian population, including civilian death, the destruction of vital infrastructure, and massive displacement.

It is with deep sadness that we observe, as reported by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that civilians account for nearly 90 per cent of casualties when explosive weapons are used indiscriminately in populated areas.<sup>1</sup> We reiterate that civilian population

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*North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*



training modules offered by the EU Training Missions in Mali, Central African Republic, Somalia and Mozambique to the national armed forces showcase the importance and relevance of our international partners. The EU has adopted Guidelines setting out operational tools for the EU and its institutions and bodies to promote compliance with IHL, and reports annually on the implementation of these Guidelines. The last report was issued in June this year.

Mr./Madam Chair,

Armed conflict breeds endless human suffering. But even wars have limits, as said by ICRC.

In a world where regrettably wars continue to be waged, we must never stop working toward the reduction of suffering of all that is to be protected: life, dignity, civilian, medical, educational and cultural property and our environment. To this end, the EU and its Member States reiterate their commitment to upholding international humanitarian law, as part of a wider commitment laid down in the EU founding Treaties to advance respect for human dignity and for the principles of