

PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

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Philippines raises concern about NPA's terrorist attacks at UN meeting

GENEVA, 20 June 2022 – The Philippines raised concerns about the New People's Army (NPA)'s continued use of improvised explosive devices (IED) functioning as landmines at a United Nations experts' meeting in Geneva, a day after the terrorist group reportedly detonated an IED in Samar, killing one soldier and injuring five others.

Speaking at the Group of Experts (GOE) meeting of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II, a technical body that deals with landmines, booby traps, and improvised explosive devices, the Philippine Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva said the NPA continues "to use explosives that destroys lives and properties and cause undue suffering in violation of International Humanitarian Law."

"They seek to escape accountability for their crimes through creative semantics. They often claim that their explosives have technical specifications that render them outside the scope of relevant treaties, for example," Philippine delegate Jonelle John S. Domingo told the meeting.

"Yet no amount of obfuscation will hide the fact that what they deploy are improvised explosive devices functioning as landmines. They are prohibited by international law and has been condemned by global public conscience," Domingo said.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the National Democratic Front (NDF), which control the NPA, have an existing agreement with the Philippine Government on mutual respect for human rights and compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

IHL instruments such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) has prohibited landmines due to the inherent humanitarian threats they pose to civilians and communities. The CPP-NPA-NDF, however, has argued that their mines are not covered by the APMBC because they are command-detonated rather than victim-activated.

"Arguing about technicalities betrays lack of good faith. Regardless of technical definitions, these weapons are abhorrent because they cause unnecessary suffering, endanger civilians, and disrupt communities," Ambassador Evan P. Garcia, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva said during a briefing by visiting

Philippine experts led by Armed Forces Logistics Support Command (LSC) deputy commander Dario Yanto, Jr.

The said experts, who are in Geneva for the GOE meeting that is being held on 20-22 July, briefed Ambassador Evan P. Garcia on the continuing IED threat posed by the NPA in the Philippines.

“The CPP-NPA-NDF must be held accountable, and I am glad that the Armed Forces of the Philippines has taken the necessary step of filing a comprehensive report with the Commission on Human Rights,” the ambassador said. **END**