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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO MEETING OF THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS
Geneva, 12 November 2009**

I am pleased to send greetings to all participants in the 2009 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

The CCW and its protocols address the use of weapons incompatible with the principles of humanity and the laws of war. The CCW also provides an important framework within which to consider how best to protect civilians and minimize the effects of certain inhumane weapons on combatants. Your efforts have made the treaty an indispensable element of today's humanitarian, disarmament and arms control machinery.

The CCW can also help us to respond to the humanitarian challenges posed by advancements in weapons technology. This is particularly relevant with regard to cluster munitions. I urge you to remain focused on strengthening the protection of civilians from the inhumane and indiscriminate impact of these weapons, and to be guided in your efforts by the high standards embodied in the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

I am encouraged by your efforts to increase the number of CCW signatories, including wider adherence and participation among developing countries and States affected by mines and explosive remnants of war. I commend the 110 states that have acceded to the Convention to date, including the 46 countries that have acceded to all the protocols to the Convention and the amended Article 1. And I once again urge all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Convention, amended Article 1 and its Protocols.

I also take this opportunity to call upon those of you that have not yet done so, to ratify the other relevant treaties in this field, namely the Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the new Convention on Cluster Munitions which is expected to enter into force in the coming year.

The United Nations will continue to strongly support your work. In that spirit, I wish you every success in your deliberations.