

<Check against delivery>

Republic of Korea

Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts (Agenda item 83)

Thank you Mr. Chair,

The Government of the Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to reaffirm its strong commitment to the implementation of international humanitarian law. We thank the Secretary-General for preparing a comprehensive report on this important agenda item.

Mr. Chair,

Last year marked the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, which were a landmark in the development of international humanitarian law. After 40 years, they still remain relevant today; perhaps even more so in light of the unprecedented humanitarian crises of the present.

The challenges that international humanitarian law faces today are becoming increasingly complex with the rapid developments in science and technology coupled with the evolving and various forms of armed conflicts in recent years.

Although we are glad to see the universal acceptance of the Geneva Conventions and welcome the trend towards a similarly wide acceptance of the two Additional Protocols, there is still much work to be done to ensure wider dissemination and full implementation of international humanitarian law.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea takes note of the resolutions adopted at the Thirty-second International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held in Geneva in December 2015. With regard to Resolution 2, inter alia, the continuation of an inclusive, State-driven intergovernmental process on the principle of consensus and in line with the guiding principles of the consultation process to find agreement on features and functions of a potential forum of States and to find ways to enhance the implementation of international humanitarian law, my delegation is open to different ideas and stands ready to constructively contribute to the discussion.

Mr. Chair,

Regarding our sustained national efforts, the Korean National Committee for International Humanitarian Law was established more than fifteen years ago. The Committee has played a key role in monitoring and coordinating the dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law at the domestic level. It has also been working closely with educational institutions, national committees of other countries, the ICRC, and various international organizations in international joint efforts to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Korea stands firmly committed to upholding the rules and principles of international humanitarian law. In line with this, my delegation would like to stress, once again, that perpetrators of the most serious crimes of international concern under international humanitarian law must be held accountable so that we can put an end to impunity.

Focused attention also be given to the need for more concerted and collective efforts to prevent, contain, limit, and settle conflicts, and therefore, to ease the plight of innocent civilians, including women and children.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to commend the work of the ICRC in facilitating and offering protection to the victims of armed conflicts, as well as in promoting and disseminating knowledge of international humanitarian law. This noble work is undertaken with considerable risk, as the disgraceful recent attacks against ICRC aid workers in Nigeria clearly demonstrate. My delegation offers our deepest condolences to the ICRC and condemns all violations of Common Article 3 in the strongest terms.

My Government will continue to work alongside the ICRC in its regional and international efforts, and we look forward to contributing to a constructive outcome at the Thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to be held next year in Geneva.

Thank you. /END/