



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Türkiye to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva and has the honour to inform that the Republic of Türkiye endorses the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), as finalised at the consultations in Geneva on 17 June 2022, with and subject to our understanding of certain key aspects of the Declaration, which is attached herewith and was delivered by our delegation at the High-Level Conference in Dublin on 18 November 2022.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Türkiye avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Missions the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 24 November 2022

Encl.: As stated.



Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office  
and other International Organizations in Geneva

**STATEMENT BY TÜRKİYE**  
**High-Level Conference on the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)**  
*(18 November 2022, Dublin)*

We thank Ireland for hosting this High-Level Conference and for taking the lead in the preparations of the “Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas”.

Türkiye has actively engaged in the negotiations for the Declaration. We have made several proposals to improve and clarify the text. Some of these, even if highly critical, were not reflected in the final text before us. Despite this, given the importance we attach to the protection of civilians and to reducing human suffering in armed conflicts, Türkiye has decided to endorse the Political Declaration subject to the following understanding:

We register at the outset our understanding that the Declaration is overall legally non-binding and that endorsing it does not create any new rights or obligations; nor can it be interpreted in a way that could change or amend existing rights and obligations. The Political Declaration is not intended to interpret or implicate existing international obligations, including customary law.

The Declaration neither constitutes an emerging customary law, nor is a basis for negotiations for a new humanitarian law. Bearing in mind that Türkiye is not a State party to the 1977 Additional Protocols I and II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the Political Declaration cannot be interpreted in a manner that creates or imposes new rights, obligations and standards other than the ones in international agreements to which Türkiye is a State party, including also in the field of international humanitarian law.

The term "non-State armed groups" depicted as “a party to an armed conflict” is ambiguous in the text and no distinction is made about terrorist organizations. As such, we register also our understanding that this term does not refer to and cannot be construed as terrorist organizations.

We categorically reject any interpretation of or from this Declaration that may or could be used as justification for any engagement with terrorist organizations.

Our position against any interpretation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions that could imply that the terrorist organizations can benefit from the protection under the Conventions or that could grant the terrorist organizations a legal status remains also intact and valid.

Terrorism is a global threat and Türkiye is one of the forefront countries in the fight against it, in accordance with the legal obligations deriving from the international agreements to which Türkiye is a State party. We will continue to act in line with the existing, applicable and legally binding commitments in our continuing fight against terrorism, in order also to prevent the terrorist organizations from using densely populated areas as shelter and to prevent the threats posed against civilians.

We would like to once again underline that we will interpret the Declaration in accordance with our legally binding treaty-based obligations.

We would expect these points that we are communicating also in writing to be registered as our understanding while endorsing this Declaration.