

**WEAPONS**

**Blinding Laser  
Weapons (Protocol IV)**

**Protocol Between the  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
and OTHER GOVERNMENTS to the  
Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the  
Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may  
be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have  
Indiscriminate Effects of October 10, 1980**

Adopted at Vienna October 13, 1995



NOTE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Pursuant to Public Law 89—497, approved July 8, 1966  
(80 Stat. 271; 1 U.S.C. 113)—

“ . . . the Treaties and Other International Acts Series issued under the authority of the Secretary of State shall be competent evidence . . . of the treaties, international agreements other than treaties, and proclamations by the President of such treaties and international agreements other than treaties, as the case may be, therein contained, in all the courts of law and equity and of maritime jurisdiction, and in all the tribunals and public offices of the United States, and of the several States, without any further proof or authentication thereof.”

## MULTILATERAL

### **Weapons: Blinding Laser Weapons (Protocol IV)**

*Protocol to the convention on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects of October 10, 1980.*

*Adopted at Vienna October 13, 1995;*

*Transmitted by the President of the United States of America to the Senate January 7, 1997 (Treaty Doc. 105-1C, 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1st Session);*

*Reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations July 29, 2008 (Senate Executive Report No. 110-22, 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d Session);*

*Advice and consent to ratification by the Senate September 23, 2008;*

*Ratified by the President December 23, 2008;*

*Ratification of the United States of America deposited January 21, 2009;*

*Entered into force July 21, 2009.*

ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL  
TO THE CONVENTION ON PROHIBITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS ON  
THE USE OF CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH  
MAY BE DEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVELY INJURIOUS  
OR TO HAVE INDISCRIMINATE EFFECTS

ARTICLE 1: ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL

The following protocol shall be annexed to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects ("the Convention") as Protocol IV:

"Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons  
(Protocol IV)

Article 1

It is prohibited to employ laser weapons specifically designed, as their sole combat function or as one of their combat functions, to cause permanent blindness to unenhanced vision, that is to the naked eye or to the eye with corrective eyesight devices. The High Contracting Parties shall not transfer such weapons to any State or non-State entity.

Article 2

In the employment of laser systems, the High Contracting Parties shall take all feasible precautions to avoid the incidence of permanent blindness to unenhanced vision. Such precautions shall include training of their armed forces and other practical measures.

Article 3

Blinding as an incidental or collateral effect of the legitimate military employment of laser systems, including laser systems used against optical equipment, is not covered by the prohibition of this Protocol.

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Article 4

For the purpose of this Protocol 'permanent blindness' means irreversible and uncorrectable loss of vision which is seriously disabling with no prospect of recovery. Serious disability is equivalent to visual acuity of less than 20/200 Snellen measured using both eyes."

ARTICLE 2: ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Protocol shall enter into force as provided in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 5 of the Convention.

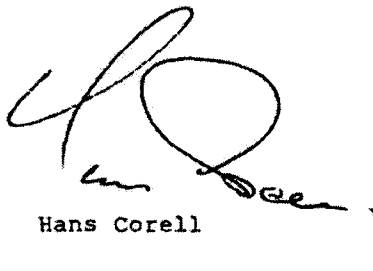
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I hereby certify that the foregoing text is a true copy of the Additional Protocol, entitled "Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons (Protocol IV)", to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects, adopted by the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention at its 8th plenary meeting on 13 October 1995, the original of which is deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Je certifie que le texte qui précède est une copie conforme du Protocole additionnel, intitulé "Protocole relatif aux armes à laser aveuglantes (Protocole IV)", à la Convention sur l'interdiction ou la limitation de l'emploi de certaines armes classiques qui peuvent être considérées comme produisant des effets traumatiques excessifs ou comme frappant sans discrimination, adopté par la Conférence des Etats Parties à la Convention lors de sa huitième session plénière le 13 octobre 1995, et dont l'original se trouve déposé auprès du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies.

For the Secretary-General,  
The Legal Counsel  
(Under-Secretary-General  
for Legal Affairs)

Pour le Secrétaire général,  
Le Conseiller juridique  
(Secrétaire général adjoint  
aux affaires juridiques)



Hans Corell

United Nations, New York  
5 December 1995

Organisation des Nations Unies  
New York, le 5 décembre 1995