

<b>Treaty/Convention</b>	<b>U. S. Signed</b>	<b>U.S. Ratified</b>	<b>U.S. Reservation/ Understanding</b>	<b>States Party</b>
Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons (Protocol IV)	X	X	X	101

## **PROTOCOL ON BLINDING LASER WEAPONS (PROTOCOL IV)**

**13 OCTOBER 1995**

### **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.

### **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.

## **U.S. UNDERSTANDINGS**

It is the understanding of the United States of America with respect to Article 2 that any decision by any military commander, military personnel, or any other person responsible for planning, authorizing or executing military action shall only be judged on the basis of that person’s assessment of the information reasonably available to the person at the time the person planned, authorized or executed the action under review, and shall not be judged on the basis of information that comes to light after the action under review was taken.