
Twelfth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War 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

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Consideration of matters pertaining to national implementation of the Protocol, including national reporting or updating on an annual basis

Report on the 2018 Meeting of Experts of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V

Submitted by the President-designate¹

I. Introduction

1. The Meeting of Experts of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) took place in Geneva on 12 (afternoon) and 13 June 2018.

2. In accordance with the decisions taken at the Tenth² and Eleventh³ Annual Conferences of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, the Meeting of Experts focused its discussions on national reporting, clearance of explosive remnants of war, victim assistance and article 4 of Protocol V on “Recording, retaining and transmission of information”. The President-designate of the Twelfth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V had informed High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on 19 February 2018 on the preparations for the 2018 Meeting of Experts.

II. Conduct of the meeting (Geneva, 12-13 June 2018)

A. National reporting

3. National annual reporting is a legal obligation for the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V in accordance with Article 10 Paragraph 2 (b) of the Protocol. Article 8 (5) of Protocol V on the provision of information to the relevant UN databases on mine action established within the United Nations system, provide the scope and content of the national annual reports. Furthermore, the Guide to National Reporting under CCW Protocol V,⁴ decided upon in the Final Document⁵ of the Fourth Conference, gives a checklist of questions to be answered under the national report. As outlined in this “Guide to National Reporting

¹ H.E. Ambassador Mouayed Saleh of Iraq

² CCW/P.V/CONF/2016/8, paragraphs 32 a-c and 26

³ CCW/P.V/CONF/2017/5, paragraphs 27 and 31

⁴ CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4/Add.1, dated 26 October 2009, and
CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4/Add.1/Corr.1, dated 4 November 2009

⁵ CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/11



under CCW Protocol V,” the High Contracting Parties are requested to provide annual reports containing information on articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 of Protocol V.

4. Reporting under CCW Protocol V is not only an essential mechanism for confidence-building and transparency among High Contracting Parties, but it is also an important tool in the monitoring and evaluation of the general status and overall implementation of the Protocol V.

5. As per paragraph 31 of the Final report⁶ of the Eleventh Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, the Conference had decided that the Meeting of Experts should among other things continue to focus on national reporting.

6. The Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) provided an update to the Meeting of Experts on national annual reporting by High Contracting Parties. At the time of the Meeting of Experts, 43 national annual reports had been received. In accordance with article 32 c) of the Final Report⁷ of the Tenth Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V the rate of reporting under Form G – Article 11 on compliance should be under specific scrutiny. 25 of the submitted 43 reports included Form G.

B. Clearance of explosive remnants of war

7. In accordance with the decisions⁸ taken at the Tenth and Eleventh Conferences of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V to further focus on the clearance of explosive remnants of war, a panel discussion, chaired by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) initiated the discussion. The panel consisted of representatives from Iraq, the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the Norwegian People's Aid and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG). After the panel discussions, affected High Contracting Parties and High Contracting Parties, were encouraged to respond to the following set of questions during their interventions:

- (i) Who is the national focal point in your country on the clearance and destruction of ERW?
- (ii) What steps have been taken to survey and assess the threat posed by explosive remnants of war?
- (iii) How are areas requiring clearance prioritized?
- (iv) What steps have been taken to assess and prioritize the needs and practicability of marking, clearance and removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war?
- (v) What steps have been taken to mark and clear the contaminated areas and destroy explosive remnants of war?
- (vi) What are the challenges to completing the clearance of explosive remnants of war?
- (vii) What steps have been taken to mobilize resources to carry out these activities?
- (viii) How are States prioritizing areas for clearance? What improvements could be made?
- (ix) What measures can be taken to ensure the efficiency of surveillance and clearance operations?
- (x) What are the key challenges being experienced in clearance operations? For example, how is the clearance of urban areas being conducted?
- (xi) What new technologies are available to assist with the clearance of ERW?

⁶ CCW/P.V/CONF/2017/5

⁷ CCW/P.V/CONF/2016/8

⁸ CCW/P.V/CONF/2016/8, paragraph 26; CCW/P.V/CONF/2017/5, paragraph 31

8. High Contracting Parties were also encouraged to report on a voluntary basis on their readiness to contribute to facilitating the marking and clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war. Delegations were also invited to speak on how they determine the priority areas to be cleared and the challenges they have encountered in providing assistance with clearance operations.

9. In the discussion following the panel, High Contracting Parties shared national experiences in clearing explosive remnants of war at the national level. High Contracting Parties also provided updates on clearance assistance that they are providing.

C. Victim Assistance

10. In accordance with the decisions⁹ taken at the Ninth Conference, High Contracting Parties agreed to “continue to review the implementation of the commitments on victim assistance under Protocol V and in particular to focus on the provision of cooperation and assistance and best practices in this area”. Donor States and organizations and affected States were encouraged to share their experiences of what has worked well and what has not worked when providing cooperation and assistance for victim assistance.

11. A panel discussion, chaired by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), took place during the Meeting of Experts. The panel initiated the discussion on victim assistance with representatives from High Contracting Parties affected by explosive remnants of war — Afghanistan, Iraq and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic — sharing their national experiences and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) presenting their activities in the domain of victim assistance.

12. In the discussion ensuing the panellists’ presentations, High Contracting Parties reiterated the paramount importance of victim assistance, which can take many shapes. High Contracting Parties also welcomed that a specific session had been dedicated to victim assistance during the Meeting of Experts. Several High Contracting Parties provided updates on efforts undertaken to implement Article 8 (2) of the Protocol on providing assistance to victims of explosive remnants of war.

D. Workshop on Article 4 of the Protocol on “Recording, retaining and transmission of information”

13. The Tenth Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V had mandated the 2017 Meeting of Experts to carry out a workshop on article 4 of the Protocol.¹⁰ As no Meeting of Experts took place in 2017, the workshop was organized in cooperation with the delegations of Ireland and Sweden at the Meeting of Experts in 2018. The representatives of Ireland elaborated on their national system for recording, retaining and transmission of information and stressed that in order to create a culture of recording, training is essential. The representative of Sweden presented the reporting mechanism used by the Swedish Armed Forces. Delegations were provided the opportunity to participate in a practical exercise on recording.

III. Recommendations

14. In line with the recommendation adopted by the Fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention, CCW/CONF.V/10, to encourage the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V to “continue with their efforts to encourage a higher rate of national reporting, including through the consideration of an appropriate mechanism; to convene an Article 4 workshop to consider in-depth the clearance of explosive remnants of war and generic preventive measures; and to prioritize the work on cooperation and assistance and

⁹ CCW/P.V/CONF/2015/11, paragraph 36

¹⁰ CCW/P.V/CONF/2016/8, paragraph 26 f)

victim assistance”, the High Contracting Parties at the Twelfth Annual Conference may wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) High Contracting Parties are to continue with their efforts to encourage a higher rate of national reporting, including but not limited to the implementation of the measures adopted at the Eleventh Annual Conference (CCW/P.V/2017/5, paragraph 27). High Contracting Parties are also encouraged to consider measures to improve reporting methodology;

(b) High Contracting Parties are encouraged to share national best practices on the implementation of Article 4 and generic preventive measures following also the guidance provided in the Technical Annex of the Protocol, and make the compilations of national best practices available on the UNODA website;

(c) All High Contracting Parties are encouraged to promote the work of Protocol V on victim assistance and in particular the Plan of Action on Victim Assistance;

(d) High Contracting Parties affected by explosive remnants of war are encouraged to implement Article 8(2) of the Protocol and the Plan of Action on Victim Assistance, and to report on these actions in Form E(a) of the national annual report. Particular focus should be given to the exchange of information and experiences on implementation of the commitments on victim assistance at the national and community levels; to updates on the latest approaches and innovations in the field of victim assistance; and to exchanges of practical experiences and lessons learned with other relevant legal instruments and for a;

(e) High Contracting Parties are encouraged to support the work of the President-designate in advancing the substantive discussions in national reporting, Article 4, generic preventive measures and victim assistance;

(f) High Contracting Parties in a position to do so are encouraged to provide technical assistance to the High Contracting Parties in need of support.
