
Wednesday 6 April 2016, 10:00am: Opening of the Meeting of Experts

1. During the opening of the Meeting of Experts, the President-designate will outline the Programme of Work. While there will not be a general exchange of views, states that wish to provide updates on their efforts towards joining Protocol V will be given the opportunity to speak during the opening session.

2. The mandate for the Meeting of Experts is set out in the recommendations agreed to at the 2015 Ninth Conference of States Parties to Protocol V Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). The recommendations are attached (see Annex I).

National Reporting

3. The opening will be followed by the session on National Reporting. As agreed at the Ninth Conference, there will be an examination of the reporting under all the forms of the National Reporting Form. Following this there will be the opportunity for an exchange on National Reporting.

Generic preventive measures (GPMs)

4. As set out in Article 9 of Protocol V, Generic Preventive Measures (GPMs) are measures aimed at “minimizing the occurrence of ERW, including but not limited to, those referred to in Part 3 of the Technical Annex”. The Technical Annex sets out measures on the management of munitions manufacturing; munitions management; training of personnel involved in the handling, transporting and use of explosive ordnance; transfer and future production.

5. States are encouraged to provide an update on their implementation of Article 9 and Part 3 of the Technical Annex. In doing so, States may wish to respond to the questions set out in the questionnaire on the management of munitions sites. Those questions were:

   a) Who in your country’s armed forces is responsible for the management of munitions sites? Does this responsibility change during an armed conflict?

   b) What are the standard operating procedures under which your munitions are managed? Are these procedures informed by the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines?

   c) What measures are taken to maintain munitions storage areas to ensure their safety and security? Are the munitions sites regularly checked? And if so, how often are the sites checked?

   d) What records are kept of those who enter such sites?

   e) What records are maintained on the numbers and types of munitions stored?

   f) How often are the munitions inspected? What procedures are in place to identify and remove degraded munitions?
g) Has your country received outside expert assistance or advice on munitions safety in storage and transportation?

States that have responded to the above questions are: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Laos People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Malta, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and United States of America.

6. According to the Small Arms Survey, the rate of reported unplanned explosions at munitions sites has increased in recent years. Given the efforts of Protocol V States Parties to implement Article 9 and Part III of the Technical Annex and United Nations Member States to implement the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs), what more can be done to encourage states to take preventive actions in this area? Proposals are:

   a) Focus on the training of personnel to carryout basic measures to improve the storage, transportation and management of munitions, over their full life cycle.

   b) One problem that has been raised under Protocol V is that of states regarding aged munitions as a military asset. Also, some states may simply not have the funding and resources available to destroy aged munitions. Delegations may wish to consider what are the characteristics of degraded munitions as this will assist states in identifying which munitions they should or should not be purchasing and which munitions should be removed from stockpiles prior to destruction or decommissioning.

   c) States Parties to Protocol V have consistently encouraged the implementation of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs) on a voluntary basis. Would it be useful to focus on raising awareness of the relevant IATGS and the measures they contain?

   d) Continue the work on encouraging donor states and organisations to support affected states with the safe storage, transportation and management of munitions. Donor states and organisations may wish to reflect on their experiences of assisting affected states and what was the most crucial support provided.

   e) Are additional regulations or guidelines required? Does the issue of munition management generally require the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument?

Wednesday 6 April 2016, 3:00pm: Panel Discussion; Surveillance, Clearance and Destruction of ERW; and Article 4

7. The afternoon session will commence with a panel discussion on the “the impact of Protocol V on preventing and alleviating the suffering caused by explosive remnants of war”. The panellists will be announced closer to the time of the meeting. Once the panellists have spoken, delegations are welcome to intervene and may wish to consider the following questions:

   a) What has been the contribution of Protocol V to preventing and remedying the “serious post-conflict humanitarian problems caused by explosive remnants of war”? What impact is the Protocol having on the carrying out and expediency of clearance operations?

   b) What changes have armed forces made to their standard operating procedures in order to comply with Protocol V?
c) Are the humanitarian dimensions\(^1\) of Protocol V contributing to the improved protection of civilians from the impact of ERW?
d) Are there areas where the Protocol has shortcomings and therefore, needs to be strengthened?

**Surveillance, Clearance and Destruction of ERW**

8. The session on **Surveillance, Clearance and Destruction of ERW** is an opportunity for affected states to provide updates on their progress in these areas. For example, states may wish to respond to the following questions:

   a) What steps have been taken to survey and assess the threat posed by ERW?
   b) What steps have been taken to assess and prioritize the needs and practicability in terms of marking and clearance, removal or destruction of ERW?
   c) What steps have been taken to mark and clear the contaminated areas and destroy ERW?
   d) What steps have been taken to mobilize resources to carry out these activities?
   e) What challenges does your country face in trying to complete its surveillance and clearance programmes?

9. In accordance with the decision taken at the Ninth Conference, “To encourage the application of the international standards, including the International Mine Action Standards, where appropriate and on a voluntary basis and raise awareness among High Contracting Parties on recent updates and amendments”, there will be a **briefing on these Standards**. Also, states and organizations are encouraged to speak on their experiences of implementing the International Mine Action Standards.

10. If time allows, there will be a discussion on **how the work on surveillance, clearance and destruction of ERW could move forward in the future**? For example, delegations may wish to reflect on the following issues:

   a) Has it been useful to receive updates from affected states on their efforts to carry out surveillance and clearance programmes?
   b) Article 3 not only requires the authority in charge of an affected territory to carry out clearance, but also the users of explosive ordnance not in control of the affected territory to “provide where feasible, inter alia technical, financial, material or human resources assistance, bilaterally or through a mutually agreed third party, including inter alia through the United Nations system or other relevant organization, to facilitate the marking and clearance, removal or destruction of such explosive remnants of war”. What national plans and policies have been developed for the implementation, if necessary of Article 3 of the Protocol?
   c) What issues could be usefully discussed in the future to improve surveillance and clearance activities? Possible topics could be battle area clearance, new technologies for surveillance and clearance, and improving the efficiency of clearance operations.

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\(^1\) For example, Article 5 on the precautions to protect the civilian population, Article 6 on the protection of humanitarian missions and organizations and Article 8 on cooperation and assistance and victim assistance and the Plan of Action on Victim Assistance.
Article 4 on Recording, Retaining and Transmission of Information on the Use and Abandonment of Explosive Ordnance

11. Article 4 requires armed forces to an armed conflict to “the maximum extent possible and as far as practicable record and retain information” on the use and abandonment of explosive ordnance. Further, “without delay after the cessation of active hostilities and as far as practicable, subject to these parties’ legitimate security interest, make such information available” to the party in control of the affected territory or a third party. The first part of the session on Article 4 on Recording, Retaining and Transmission of Information on the Use and Abandonment of Explosive Ordnance will allow time for states to provide updates on their experiences of developing and implementing Article 4 procedures.

12. At the Ninth Conference, States Parties decided to focus on increasing the number of states that are implementing Article 4. While the number of states implementing Article 4 procedures has gradually improved, the overall understanding of these provisions and their implementation is poor. **What can be done to improve both the understanding and implementation of Article 4 in the future? Would it be useful to:**
   
   a) Hold a workshop type session on Article 4 procedures during a Meeting of Experts.
   
   b) Provide expertise to advise on the implementation of Article 4 bilaterally.
   
   c) Consider the utility of the generic electronic template on Article 4 (attached in Annex II).

Thursday 7 April 2016, Cooperation and Assistance, Victim Assistance and Closing

Cooperation and Assistance

13. During this session, donor states and organizations are encouraged to provide updates on their efforts to support the implementation of Protocol V and priorities. Affected states are encouraged to detail the resources and expertise that they require for dealing with ERW.

14. Last year the CCW Implementation Support Unit produced an informal paper on the needs of affected states and the cooperation and assistance which is provided by different donor states and organisations (see Annex III). The Implementation Support Unit welcomes any updates and additions to this information. Also, feedback on the usefulness of this informal paper would be appreciated.

Victim Assistance

15. At the beginning of this session there will be an opportunity for affected states to speak on their efforts to implement Article 8(2) and the Protocol V Plan of Action on Victim Assistance. Also, affected states are encouraged to report on these actions in Form E(a) of the national reporting form.

16. In accordance with the decision taken at the Ninth Conference, States 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 organisations and affected states are encouraged to share their
experiences of what has worked well and what has not worked when providing cooperation and assistance for victim assistance.