



PORTUGAL 2007

**1<sup>st</sup> Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V  
on ERW 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  
(CCW)**

**Statement by  
Mr. José Júlio Pereira Gomes  
Head of the Portuguese Delegation  
on behalf of the European Union**

**PROTOCOL V**

**Geneva, 5 November 2007**

*(Check against delivery)*

Mr. President,

1. I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

First of all let me congratulate you on your election as President of the First Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V.

2. The entry into force of Protocol V on 12 November 2006, demonstrates that the CCW constitutes a dynamic framework capable of responding to pressing humanitarian issues, while also taking into account military concerns. It is the first multilateral agreement to deal with the wide range of unexploded and abandoned ordnance which regularly threaten civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarian workers after the end of an armed conflict. Today, less than a year after entry into force, 33 States (tbc) have acceded to the Protocol. This is encouraging and we need to build upon this.
3. The fact that civilians continue to be killed or injured by unexploded and abandoned explosive ordnance and the continuous threat posed by explosive remnants of war, hampering humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and economic development, highlight the importance of achieving the objectives set out in Protocol V. The EU supports continued efforts to achieve the universalisation and the effective implementation of Protocol V.
4. Promoting and achieving universal acceptance of Protocol V remains a priority for the EU. We call on CCW States-Parties that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Protocol as soon as possible. We encourage all States Parties, to inform us during this meeting on the status of their national process towards becoming Party to Protocol V.  
The EU Member States have either already ratified Protocol V or are in the process of doing so. They have started to take the necessary steps to fully implement the obligations resulting from the ratification of Protocol V.
5. We are pleased by the work done by Preparatory Committee meeting held last June.  
We welcome the Conclusions and Recommendations as contained in its Procedural Report (CCW/IP.V/CONF/2007/3\*) and the adjustments agreed ad referendum during the informal meeting of 1st October 2007. We are convinced that they will contribute to the effective implementation of the Protocol. We attach particular importance to further developing a mechanism to facilitate consultation, cooperation and assistance.
6. The EU remains determined to further support the universalisation and implementation of Protocol V to the benefit of the civilian population suffering from the effects of ERW in post- conflict situations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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\* *Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*