
**Fifth 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**

28 November 2011

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Geneva, 9–10 November 2011

Summary record of the 2nd meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 9 November 2011, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Khvostov (Belarus)

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Report(s) of any subsidiary organ(s)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Report(s) of any subsidiary organ(s)

*Thematic discussion on clearance and the article 4 generic electronic template
(CCW/P.V/CONF/2011/3 and Corr.1)*

1. **Ms. Drexler** (Germany), Coordinator on clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war under Protocol V and the article 4 generic electronic template, introducing the report on the topic, which was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2011/3 and Corr.1, said that the April 2010 meeting of experts had focused on exchange of information on clearance and destruction activities, priority setting for clearance programmes, the potential environmental impact of clearance and destruction programmes and the article 4 generic electronic template. Various delegations had provided information on their countries' activities in those areas. She invited the Conference to approve the recommendations contained in paragraph 19 of the report.
2. **Mr. Marchenko** (Ukraine), illustrating his remarks with a slide presentation, said that two world wars and a long period of military activity had left 15,000 ha of Ukrainian territory contaminated with explosive remnants of war. Post-war demining efforts had concentrated on populated areas and the transportation network, but explosive remnants of war still posed a problem in many remote parts of the country, along the seashore and at 34 former military test sites covering some 150,000 ha. Since 1996 explosive ordnance had caused 325 civilian casualties, including 139 fatalities. In 2011, 18 people had already been killed or injured. About a quarter of the victims were children.
3. In the previous five years, over 1.4 million explosive remnants of war had been neutralized across 6,400 ha. All demining operations were conducted in compliance with the International Mine Action Standards, and the public was kept informed of the dangers posed by explosive remnants of war.
4. The State had earmarked around \$18 million for a number of measures to clear areas of explosive remnants of war and to mitigate related problems, including some steps taken under a State emergency response programme for the period from 2012 to 2016, which provided for the further demining of territory. A separate, regional programme identified Sevastopol and Kerch as high-risk areas, according them priority status in demining operations; it had cleared nearly 1,500 ha. Efforts also focused on ammunition storage sites such as those around the cities of Lozova and Kyiv. In the aftermath of the detonation of some 93,000 tons of explosives and the dispersion of about 20,000 tons of explosive remnants over 247 ha in Lozova in 2008, Ukraine had in 2011 adopted a programme to address the problems remaining in the wake of the accident, to clear the area completely, to neutralize remaining explosive hazards and to minimize the risk of accidents. In 2011, 100 ha had been cleared of 4,500 tons of remnants at the Lozova site. Also in 2011, some 3,300 ha of military test sites and battlegrounds had been cleared.
5. Ukraine was grateful for the technical assistance provided by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.
6. **Mr. Voinov** (Belarus), illustrating his remarks with a slide presentation, said that every year, the mobile mine clearance teams of the Armed Forces and firefighters of the Ministry of Internal Affairs neutralized some 20,000 items of explosive ordnance. A decree of 8 April 2011 assigned responsibility for demining and neutralizing specific types of explosive materials to two ministries: the Ministry of Defence was to neutralize and destroy explosive ordnance throughout Belarus, except in populated areas; the Ministry of Internal Affairs was to carry out demining operations in populated areas, and was also responsible for the clearance of aerial bombs throughout the country. The most complicated mine

clearance operations were carried out jointly by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry for Emergency Response. In the previous year, they had found near populated areas and neutralized 64 rounds from a German rocket launcher, over 6,000 items of explosive ordnance at a former German depot and, in exceptionally difficult circumstances, 15 shells from the riverbed of the Dnepr River. Military and local authorities worked together to ensure that the Armed Forces were informed rapidly of the location of explosive remnants of war, and awareness campaigns were carried out in areas where such hazards were found. Training of mine clearance experts was carried out in the Armed Forces and in a mine clearance centre operated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

7. **Mr. Thammavongsa** (Observer for the Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that his country was still contending with the legacy of the conflict that had been waged in the region four decades previously. Explosive remnants of war continued to claim victims, particularly children, and impeded socio-economic development. In recent years clearance efforts had been stepped up, and six humanitarian agencies and seven commercial mine clearance companies were working to clear the land of unexploded ordnance. Since 1996 a total of 307 km² had been cleared and over 1.3 million items of unexploded ordnance destroyed. More than 2 million people had benefited from risk education visits to villages during the period.

8. Much work still remained to be done. He expressed his Government's appreciation to the donor countries and international and non-governmental organizations for their help in tackling the problem of unexploded ordnance and expressed the hope that such assistance would continue.

9. **Mr. Kakar** (Observer for Afghanistan), describing the situation in his country regarding unexploded mines and cluster munitions, said that consolidation of databases, coupled with ongoing surveys and the return of refugees to abandoned villages, had yielded evidence of previously unknown contamination.

10. Since 1990 the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan had cleared more than 1,400 km² contaminated with explosive remnants of war and destroyed more than 12 million items of unexploded ordnance. However, there were still more than 5,700 minefields and battlefields listed in the database, covering some 620 km² of land throughout the country. Furthermore new contaminated areas were still being found. Explosive remnants of war remained a serious problem. The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, the existence of ammunition caches and civilian access to them, collection of scrap metal by the poor and lack of awareness about the risks of mines, especially among certain populations such as returnees, all contributed to that problem.

11. His Government therefore intended to request an extension to its deadline of 2013 for the destruction of anti-personnel mines under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (the Ottawa Convention). Under the Afghanistan Compact, 70 per cent of the land area contaminated with mines and unexploded ordnance should have been cleared by March 2011; a level of 69 per cent had been achieved.

12. For Afghanistan to eliminate the problem of unexploded ordnance and become a party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, it would require a lasting peace. In the meantime, ongoing support from donor countries and other partners was needed for the Mine Action Programme to continue its work. He expressed his Government's gratitude for the assistance already provided.

13. **Mr. Abdelrahman** (Observer for the Sudan) said that, while his country was not a party to the Convention, it considered its commitments under the Ottawa Convention, to which it was a State party, to be consistent with its spirit. A mine action programme had been established in 2002, and the Sudan had since then been clearing land mines and

explosive remnants of war from its territory. By August 2011, over 8,000 anti-personnel mines, more than 2,600 anti-tank mines, nearly 383,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition and almost 44,000 items of unexploded ordnance had been destroyed. Mine clearance operations were currently focusing on 305 registered hazard areas. Owing to recent conflicts in the states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan it was expected that new contaminated areas would be identified.

14. To date 1,732 mine victims had been listed in the relevant national databases, but the total number of victims was not known since no comprehensive survey had ever been conducted. More than 114,000 people, including returnees, people from affected communities and humanitarian workers, had received mine risk education messages. Seventeen mine risk education and community liaison teams were operating in the Sudan. Because of limited funding, efforts had been hampered and had out of necessity focused on the highest-priority areas; additional funding was needed to provide wider coverage and tackle newly discovered affected areas. The Government of the Sudan was grateful to donor countries for their support.

15. **Ms. Alvarado** (Peru) said that the Peruvian Mine Action Centre (CONTRAMINAS) was responsible for coordinating efforts to clear all anti-personnel mines from the country's territory and for implementing Protocol V. More than 4,000 anti-personnel mines had been destroyed in recent years, and some of the work had been carried out in coordination with Ecuador, which had helped to build confidence between the two countries. The Peruvian Armed Forces had established procedures and protocols for disposing of arms stockpiles and destroying explosive remnants of war.

16. With support from the International Committee of the Red Cross, CONTRAMINAS was planning a workshop on Protocol V, to be held in January 2012 for the benefit of representatives of the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces and others involved in dealing with explosive remnants of war, including international organizations and potential donors. The workshop was designed to increase knowledge of the Protocol's goals and its implementation in Peru. The authorities hoped to boost the capacity of the various institutions to contribute to the Protocol's implementation. Encouraging implementation was a slow and complex process, and Peru was counting on support from other Parties. The Government hoped to complete its first national report on implementation of Protocol V in the coming months and to submit it on time.

17. **Mr. Parshikov** (Russian Federation) said that his country advocated the further strengthening and universalizing of Protocol V. The Protocol balanced humanitarian, military and economic interests and in concrete terms tackled issues addressed by the Convention, including the humanitarian problems associated with explosive remnants of war. In the context of ongoing regional conflicts, the role of the Protocol would only grow more pronounced.

18. The vast territory of the Russian Federation was still contaminated with military ordnance from the Second World War, and several means were used to counter the genuine threat posed to the population. Over 40 demining teams, equipped with state-of-the-art technology for surveying, clearing, removing and destroying explosive remnants of war, were deployed to neutralize explosive hazards in north, west and central Russia. Mine-detection dogs played an important role in demining teams. Raising public awareness about the conduct to adopt in parts of the country which had been particularly affected during the Second World War was an integral part of the work of military engineers. In accordance with article 4 of the Protocol, mine density, details on explosive remnants of war and specifications about the neutralization and destruction of hazards were recorded in the headquarters of each military district; the information was subsequently used to improve clearance operations.

19. Russian specialists were ready to offer assistance in humanitarian demining and in the neutralizing of explosive remnants of war, including by training experts in the field. In Serbia, Russian specialists had already neutralized 1,626 explosive remnants of war and mine clearance staff had searched some 54,000 ha of terrain for mines.

20. **Ms. Drexler** (Germany), Coordinator, said that the thematic discussion had shown that progress in clearance and destruction had been achieved, though challenges remained. Discussion of the topic of clearance should thus continue within the framework of the meetings devoted to Protocol V. There had also been calls to strengthen the Protocol and work towards its universal adoption, which were obligations shared by all Parties to the Convention.

21. **Mr. Maresca** (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)), while endorsing the substance of the report under consideration, said that the title of section E of the report gave the impression that the discussion held in April on article 4 had been limited to the generic electronic template. The discussion had in fact ranged more widely and had addressed the general implementation of article 4 and the challenges related to it, in particular for small States.

22. **Ms. Drexler** (Germany), Coordinator, said that indeed the substantive reach of section E of her report went well beyond the electronic template, and that the title should perhaps be changed accordingly.

23. **Mr. Burke** (Ireland) proposed that the title of section E of the report should be changed to refer to “recording, retaining and transmission of information”, which was the wording used in the title of article 4 of the Protocol.

24. **The President** said he took it that the Conference wished to approve the recommendations set out in the Coordinator’s report, subject to the change proposed by the representative of Ireland.

25. *It was so decided.*

Thematic discussion on national reporting (CCW/P.V/CONF/2011/5)

26. **Mr. Gill** (India), Coordinator on national reporting, introducing the report on the topic, which was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2011/5, said that the report reflected the approach which he had outlined in a letter of 8 March 2011 and a presentation during the meeting of experts in April.

27. Since the adoption of the guide to national reporting in November 2010, there had been continued progress in the submission of national reports. Of the 76 States bound by the Protocol, 45 had submitted reports in 2011, and he commended them for their efforts to fulfil their obligations. Boosting the number of High Contracting Parties reporting on the implementation of the Protocol remained a priority.

28. In his opinion, reflected in the recommendations of paragraph 6 of the report, the possibility of changing the content of the forms approved at the First Conference or of the guide approved at the Fourth Conference should remain under consideration in 2012. The discussions at the 2012 meeting of experts and the Coordinator’s assessment of the utility of the guide would help to illustrate the impact of the guide on each country’s report.

29. **Mr. Meier** (United States of America) said that in his country’s case the reporting process had not been complicated. From the drafting to the submission stages, the entire process had taken four months, and had been greatly facilitated by the forms in the guide to national reporting and open access to reports from other High Contracting Parties. He encouraged High Contracting Parties that had not filed their annual reports to do so.

30. The Department of Defense had been tasked with completing forms A, B, C, G and H, while the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement of the State Department had completed forms D, E and F. To fill in the forms, the Department of Defense had requested information from each of the four armed services, which scrupulously kept records with details on hazards. Once the information had been compiled, it had been cleared by the Department of Defense, the State Department and the national security staff at the White House.

31. **Mr. Gill** (India), Coordinator, reiterated that it was too early to make changes to the guide. It would take time for the High Contracting Parties to settle into a good rhythm for reporting and for the Coordinator to assess the impact of the guide as it currently stood. It was apparent, however, that the guide and the forms, particularly form I, allowed countries sufficient flexibility for presenting their information.

32. **The President** said he took it that the Conference was ready to approve the recommendations contained in the Coordinator's report.

33. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.