

**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**

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**Report on Cooperation and Assistance and on Requests for
Assistance**

**Submitted by the Coordinator¹ on Cooperation and Assistance and
Requests for Assistance**

A. Introduction

1. The two closely related topics of Cooperation and Assistance and of Requests for Assistance, pursuant to Articles 7 and 8 of the Protocol, are at the heart of Protocol V implementation. They are important contributing factors to the Protocol's universalisation, particularly in the case of ERW-affected States.
2. The Meetings of Experts offer a valuable opportunity to facilitate the matching of needs with resources, and to facilitate other aspects of cooperation and assistance, by increasing contact and mutual understanding between those dealing with the problems posed by ERW and those in a position to provide assistance.
3. The subjects of cooperation and assistance and of requests for assistance are closely connected with other substantive areas of work under the Protocol, principally clearance and victim assistance. Indeed, both of these subjects are specifically referred to in Article 8 on Cooperation and Assistance, respectively in paragraphs (1) and (2) of that Article.

**B. Organization and work of the 2011 Meeting of Experts on
cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance**

4. The 2011 Meeting of Experts continued and built on the substantive discussions which had taken place in 2010. The interconnection referred to at paragraph 3 above was illustrated by the fact that a number of countries commented in the session on victim

¹ In accordance with the relevant decision of the Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, as contained in paragraph 44 (c) of its Final Document (CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/11), the discussions on Cooperation and Assistance and Requests for Assistance, pursuant to Articles 7 and 8 of the Protocol, were coordinated by Mr. James C. O'Shea of Ireland.

assistance on their experiences of cooperation and assistance in that area, both as donors and as recipients of assistance, and by the co-chairing of a segment on the needs of ERW-affected States by the Coordinator on Clearance² and the present coordinator.

5. In the area of national reporting on cooperation and assistance, satisfaction was expressed that, further to the adoption by the Fourth Conference of a decision in that regard³, the reports submitted to date in 2011 showed a clear improvement in the level of reporting by High Contracting Parties of assistance provided by them.

6. The relevance and probable future utility of the Web-Based Information System for Protocol V (WISP.V) was noted. It was stated that, while the implementation of such a system would have obvious benefits for the operation of the Protocol as a whole, those benefits were likely to be especially noticeable in the area of cooperation and assistance.

7. It was noted that, from an analysis of the reports which had been submitted to date, quite a lot of activity was under way in the area of cooperation and assistance. Of the 45 States whose reports submitted in 2010 and 2011 were available on the CCW website at the time of the Meeting of Experts, some 30, or two-thirds, had reported providing cooperation and assistance, and five had reported seeking or benefiting from cooperation and assistance. A further two countries had reported both benefiting from assistance provided by others, and providing cooperation and assistance themselves, such as for example by training clearance personnel from other countries or otherwise sharing their experience as ERW-affected States.

8. The Meeting of Experts benefited from detailed presentations by the delegations of France and India regarding their activities in the area of cooperation and assistance:

(a) France made a presentation on its practical activities in the area of cooperation and assistance, which included training of clearance personnel in Lebanon, training of personnel from other countries in France, support to training of personnel in other countries, including to a regional training centre (CPADD – *centre de perfectionnement aux actions de déminage et de dépollution*) located in Benin, and provision of technical support and translation of relevant documents and standards. The presentation included reference to cooperation with Brazil to extend to personnel from Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa training at the regional centre in Benin, hitherto aimed mainly at French-speaking countries. Information about the CPADD (in French and in English) is available on its website: www.cpadd.org.

(b) India outlined activities undertaken by it directly in Angola, Cambodia, Laos and Afghanistan, and its support to NGO clearance work in Sri Lanka. The activities conducted by India included training of local military Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel to conduct clearance operations in accordance with UN standards, as well as to train other members of their countries' armed forces. The Indian presentation also contained information on training provided for foreign EOD personnel in India.

9. The delegation of Estonia made a presentation on a project on ERW clearance and rehabilitation support in Georgia. This project addresses the two main areas of cooperation and assistance under the Protocol, namely clearance and victim assistance, and is designed to continue to have an impact long after its completion, by incorporating elements of capacity building and sustainability (provision of equipment and training of personnel, including training them to train others).

² Ms. Petra Drexler of Germany

³ CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/11, paragraph 35(b) – see also CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/3, paragraph 5.

10. The delegation of the Philippines made a presentation on the recent destruction of a large quantity of ordnance dating from the Second World War, with the assistance of the United States, as well as ongoing work on clearance and risk education with the involvement of domestic and international NGOs.

11. The delegation of Hungary provided information on an ongoing project involving cooperation between EOD personnel from Hungary and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which arose from attendance by the latter at the Hungarian-organised ERW workshop in Budapest in June 2009. For its part, the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has experience of receiving assistance as an ERW-affected country, provided information on assistance which it had in turn provided to other countries, drawing on its own experience, and expressed its readiness to assist other ERW-affected countries in a wide range of areas, including with the establishment of national mine action centres, the development of necessary regulations, strategies and activity plans, as well as with the training of clearance personnel and the identification of suspected hazardous areas.

12. The delegations of Nicaragua and Georgia both acknowledged assistance received from a wide range of countries.

13. A number of delegations provided information on assistance provided by them to ERW-affected States, and on possibilities of further assistance, including practical information regarding the method of submission of requests.

14. Issues mentioned in the discussion as meriting further consideration included how to promote cooperation among developing countries, how to mobilise resources from a greater range of sources, including the private sector and international development banks, and how to strengthen coordination of international assistance at both the global and national levels including through modalities such as trust funds.

15. The following points may be noted from presentations and remarks of States during the session on Cooperation and Assistance:

(a) There is a large amount of activity under way in the area of cooperation and assistance;

(b) The assistance available takes many forms – including financial, material, training and advice;

(c) The providers of assistance are many and varied, and the activities under way include both the provision of assistance by ERW-affected States to other affected States (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina) and South-South cooperation (e.g. presentation by India);

(d) Cooperation among countries providing assistance can maximise its effect, including by drawing on their respective strengths (e.g. cooperation by France and Brazil in the training of personnel from countries in Africa, joint efforts of several countries in project described in Estonian presentation);

(e) National capacity-building can form an important part of cooperation and assistance activities, and ensure that such activities provide long-term benefits to ERW-affected States (this was reflected in several presentations and remarks, e.g. by France, India and Estonia);

16. Each of the three States which have submitted requests for assistance pursuant to Article 7 of the Protocol provided information to the Meeting of Experts on the current status of their requests. All three were in a position to report positive developments, as follows:

(a) Belarus reported that it had been contacted by one State, which expressed interest in providing assistance in response to its request. Consultations had been

undertaken with this State both in capital and in Geneva. Belarus would update further in the light of developments;

(b) Serbia reported on activities undertaken in 2010, including on assistance received via the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF) and donations by the Russian Federation and the USA;

(c) Ukraine reported on ongoing contacts with UNMAS, which had resulted in an agreement to provide 30 metal detectors and training in their use. Ukraine also reported on the provision of 111 sets of protective equipment by the OSCE, funded by Denmark, Germany, Ireland and the USA⁴;

17. It was noted that the submission of a request for assistance under Article 7 was only one of the ways in which States affected by ERW could bring their needs to the attention of States or relevant international organizations and institutions which might be in a position to provide assistance – other possibilities included making presentations at Meetings of Experts or by approaching potential donors directly.

18. High Contracting Parties in a position to do so were encouraged to consider providing assistance in response to any requests received, since the provision of assistance in response to requests was an important means of operationalising the relevant provisions of the Protocol.

C. Recommendations

19. Bearing in mind the foregoing, it is recommended that the Fifth Conference of the High Contracting Parties decide as follows:

(a) To continue the consideration of cooperation and assistance, and of requests for assistance, as a priority issue in the context of the Meetings of Experts and the Conferences of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V.

(b) To give particular attention in 2012, without prejudice to the right of any participant to raise any issue for consideration, to the potential for cooperation among developing countries and among ERW-affected States, as well as to cooperation among providers of assistance.

(c) To encourage High Contracting Parties, relevant international organizations and institutions which might be in a position to do so, to consider providing assistance in response to requests submitted under Article 7 of the Protocol, or in response to needs identified in other ways, including during the Meetings of Experts.

(d) To encourage States which have submitted requests for assistance to continue to provide regular updates on the status of those requests.

⁴ Ukraine subsequently informed the coordinator about a technical visit to Ukraine conducted by UNMAS on 18-29 September 2011, aimed at elaborating further areas where UNMAS can provide support to Ukraine and facilitating the adoption of the relevant project document to provide a framework for future cooperation.