
**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 generic preventive measures

**Submitted by the Coordinator¹ on generic preventive measures, in
accordance with article 9 and the technical annex of the Protocol**

A. Introduction

1. The Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V (Geneva, 22 and 23 November 2010) adopted the Guide for the implementation of Part 3 of the technical annex, the text of which is reproduced in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/6/Add.1, and recommended that it be implemented in the national systems of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V as a best practice.
2. It also decided that the 2011 meeting of experts should continue the practice of addressing one specific technical issue directly related to the implementation of article 9 and part 3 of the technical annex of Protocol V. It also invited all States parties to share during that meeting their national technical approaches and experience in the area of generic preventive measures.
3. The April 2011 meeting of experts focused on munitions management, the life cycle of weapons and tests carried out throughout that life cycle.

**B. Dealing with particular topics: munitions management and discussions
of national approaches**

4. Detailed presentations were made at the meeting of experts by independent professionals and the delegations of Belgium, Germany and France.
5. Mr. Lee Springer, a consultant with the United States Department of Defense and Department of State, presented an overview of the testing measures employed throughout

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 (f) of its final document (CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/11), the discussion on generic preventive measures, pursuant to article 9 and the technical annex of the Protocol, was coordinated by Mr. Eric Steinmyller (France).

the development and lifespan of military equipment. He focused on the need for such tests and on methods that took into account their potentially high cost.

6. The German expert, Lieutenant-Colonel Volkmar Posseldt, chief of munitions and explosives security at Joint Support Command in the Federal Ministry of Defence, made a presentation on regulations and practices in Germany with regard to the storage and transport of munitions. These strict practices had ensured that no accidental explosions had occurred in munitions depots in Germany in more than 50 years. He welcomed efforts to standardize regulations around the world through the publication of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

(a) Germany had changed its storage system, moving from light constructions to large earth-covered storage centres known as igloos or Stradleys. The basic rules for these standard installations were as follows:

- (i) They contained only munitions and explosives;
- (ii) They were not stored together with dangerous goods;
- (iii) Safe distances and loading capacities were calculated in accordance with the United Nations classification system.

(b) Highly qualified staff received continuing training, thereby helping to uphold the accident-free record.

7. The Belgian expert, Major Constandt, head of munitions for the Army, Navy and Air Force at defence staff headquarters, made a presentation on munitions management in Belgium, focusing on the surveillance of munitions still in service and their maintenance throughout their life cycle.

8. The French expert, Mr. Decobecq, of the French Defence Procurement Agency, made a presentation on France's approach to munitions management and testing. He focused on the need to establish, from the outset, a statement of requirements for munitions in combination with their projected life cycle, as well as on inspections of munitions aimed at updating their life cycle. Such inspections facilitated decision-making on whether to extend the working life of munitions or withdraw them from service early, thereby avoiding the premature replacement of munitions in good working order and enabling the detection and withdrawal from service of those that posed some risk.

9. Mr. Decobecq, who was the prime mover behind the guide for the implementation of part 3 of the technical annex, which was adopted at the meeting of the States parties in November 2010, also addressed the issue of its implementation by States parties. In order to reap the full benefit of work that was the product of contributions by all the experts over a period of five years, it would be useful to share the experience of the States parties in their use of the guide. Discussions had made clear, however, that its very recent adoption made such a sharing of experience as yet premature.

10. It emerged from discussions at the meeting that:

(a) The United Nations Mine Action Service had asked for attention to be focused on procedures for the destruction of stockpiles resulting not only from the clearance of ordnance from polluted land but from the accumulation of surplus munitions. He would like to see the matter more closely studied by the States parties to the Protocol. Recalling the numerous disastrous accidents that had occurred in the course of the year, he mentioned the case of Guinea-Bissau, which had requested assistance from the United Nations to develop and implement a plan of action for the destruction of surplus munitions. Mine Action Service had deployed a support team there in February 2011 and called for financial support and expertise;

(b) Study of weapons development and, in particular, of their life cycles, had underlined the importance of properly implementing article 36, regarding new weapons, of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol I), as the International Committee of the Red Cross had recalled. The article stipulated that: “In the study, development, acquisition or adoption of a new weapon, means or method of warfare, a High Contracting Party is under an obligation to determine whether its employment would, in some or all circumstances, be prohibited by this Protocol or by any other rule of international law applicable to the High Contracting Party.”

C. Recommendations

11. The Fifth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V may wish to take the following decisions:

(a) To continue the practice of addressing one specific technical issue directly related to the implementation of article 9 and part 3 of the technical annex of Protocol V;

(b) To invite all High Contracting Parties to share during the 2012 meeting of experts their national technical approaches and experience in implementing article 9 and part 3 of the technical annex of Protocol V. On that occasion, the High Contracting Parties might also indicate how the guide has contributed to the implementation of part 3 of the technical annex, the text of which is reproduced in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/6/Add.1. The guide was adopted by the Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties, which recommended that it be implemented in the national systems of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V as a best practice;

(c) To develop, under the aegis of the Coordinator and with the assistance of the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, a web page on generic preventive measures on the Convention website, in order to facilitate access to declarations, presentations, current guidelines and other resources.
