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**Seventh Conference of the High Contracting Parties** 30 August 2013  
**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(s) of any subsidiary organ(s)

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

**Submitted by the Coordinator<sup>1</sup> on Cooperation and Assistance and**  
**Requests for Assistance**

**Introduction**

1. Cooperation and assistance has always been a priority issue for High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and this continued to be the case in 2013. Affected countries continue to grapple with how they will carry out clearance and victim assistance and ensure that their national programmes can be sustained in the long term. For donor countries the challenge is to maintain their funding for ERW and mine action in what is a challenging financial environment.

2. In accordance with the recommendations agreed to at the Sixth Conference of High Contracting Parties, this year's discussions at the Meeting of Experts focused on encouraging donor countries to provide information on their efforts to assist affected States and affected countries to provide updates on their progress towards fulfilling the obligations of Protocol V and where they will need assistance. On the second point, a small group meeting of affected countries and invited donor countries was held. The purpose of the small group meeting was to discuss the priorities and challenges that affected countries faced towards fulfilling the obligations of Protocol V and whether or not they had national plans in place.

**National reporting on cooperation and assistance**

3. The Coordinator welcomed the detailed information provided in High Contracting Parties' national reports concerning the international cooperation and assistance they

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the decision of the Sixth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, as contained in paragraph 39 (c) of its final document (CCW/P.V/CONF/2012/10), the discussions on cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance pursuant to Article 7 were led by Mr. Yevgen Lisuchenko of Ukraine as Coordinator.

provided. Also, information provided by affected High Contracting Parties in the reporting Form F, outlining the challenges they faced towards implementing the Protocol's objectives was important for assessing the current needs of affected countries. At the time of this year's Meeting of Experts and from the national reports submitted in 2012, 27 High Contracting Parties provided information on their support for cooperation and assistance.

### **Updates on cooperation and assistance and needs for assistance**

4. During the discussion on 'Updates on cooperation and assistance', the following affected High Contracting Parties provided updates:

5. The following affected High Contracting Parties provided updates:

(a) Updating on the status of its request for assistance submitted in 2009, Belarus greatly appreciated the Government of India's readiness to provide assistance and reported on the final stage of acquiring 25 mine detectors, 90 radios and 30 global positioning systems (GPS) equipment. This assistance would strengthen the capacity of clean-up units and reduce the threat that ERW poses to civilians.

(b) Lao People's Democratic Republic expressed its appreciation for the international assistance provided so far by the international community and reiterated its intention to submit a request for assistance within the framework of Protocol V. Lao People's Democratic Republic indicated the growing demand for land use (20,000 hectares per year), which exceeds the combined capacity of existing operators in ERW clearance (6,000 hectares per year). In response to this demand, the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic plans to strengthen the sector of humanitarian demining through the involvement of its military.

6. The following affected observer countries provided updates:

(a) Armenia highlighted the work undertaken with the United States of America and non-governmental organisations to establish the National Humanitarian Demining Centre in 2002 and a special mine detection team of dogs. From the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict more than 31 thousand hectares were heavily contaminated with mines and unexploded ordnance (rockets, grenades and other ERW). Through mostly its own efforts, Armenia had cleared 22,000 hectares over the period of 2002 to 2012. Armenia also spoke about its efforts to assist other affected countries. For example from 2003 to 2008, it assisted with demining in Iraq.

(b) Montenegro has known areas of UXO contamination from the World Wars I and II, with several sites being particularly dangerous to civilians (for example, Lustica Peninsula). Montenegro lacked the necessary resources and adequate equipment to survey, clear and destroy UXO and to secure its stockpiles of munitions. In order to advance this work, Montenegro needed assistance in the form of metal detectors, protective equipment, special vehicles with trailers, working uniforms, adequate warehouses and storage places for the disposal UXO assets prior to their destruction. International financial and technical assistance for carrying out the surveillance, clearance and destruction of UXO would also be critical to Montenegro's progress in dealing with ERW contamination.

7. The following donor countries and organizations provided updates:

(a) Australia's national Mine Action Strategy for the Australian aid program 2010-2014, which commits AUD 100 million to reducing the threat of mines, cluster munitions and other ERW, focuses on the most heavily affected countries in the Asia-Pacific region, while maintaining the flexibility to respond to other emerging needs and priorities against four outcomes. The four outcomes were (1) improving the quality of life for injured persons and their families and communities; (2) reducing the number of deaths

and injuries from mines and ERW; (3) enhancing affected countries' capacity to manage their mine action programmes; and (4) effective advocacy on mine action. In the Pacific region, UXO remains a threat to communities, the environment and a serious obstacle to development. In response to this problem, Australia was a key contributor to a workshop on the implementation of the Pacific Islands Forum Regional UXO Strategy in October 2012. Also, Australia is undertaking steps to support the Pacific Islands Forum in a follow-up meeting in June 2013, which would support affected Pacific Island countries to develop UXO national action plans. Australian Defence Force's (ADF) **Operation Render Safe** provided assistance for ERW clearance and destruction in Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

(b) China reported that in 2011, it provided various demining training programmes and assistance to ERW victims; and in 2012 financial assistance was contributed to Lebanon (200,000 United States dollars) and support for victim assistance in Lao People's Democratic Republic (US\$ 180,000). In 2013, China would carryout programmes in Jordan and Sri Lanka to provide relief to victims of mines and cluster munitions.

(c) Estonia made a presentation on the international assistance provided to Georgia through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Support Agency (Georgia Partnership for Peace Trust Fund III) during 2010-2013. This had been led by the Czech Republic, Estonia and Lithuania. It was also supported by Australia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Denmark, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Norway, Romania, Poland, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States of America and USA (totaling 1,16 million Euros) enabled building up Georgia's medical rehabilitation capabilities (for example, through the provision of equipment to Gori Military Hospital) and ERW clearance capabilities (provision of training and equipment to the military). Plans were in place to initiate a continued 24 months NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund Project (with a budget of 1,6 million Euros) to clear UXO from the Skra site, returning the land to local authorities, and provide further EOD training, enabling the Georgian Engineer Brigade to conduct more advanced ordinance disposal in conjunction with NATO Allies.

(d) The United States of America continued to provide technical and financial assistance to help States with problems concerning ERW. It provided assistance for clearance, including existing ERW at the time of entry into force of Protocol V, destruction of aging and excess munitions and the proper management of stockpiles. The Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) Program, which is led by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs of the Department of State, contains a comprehensive approach that includes humanitarian mine action, battle area clearance, ERW clearance, SALW destruction (including at-risk munitions and man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS)), stockpile reduction and physical security and stockpile management. The CWD program totaled over 149 million United States dollars in 2012 and the projected budget for 2013 was 126 million United States dollars.

8. In response to a request to update the Meeting of Experts on the Mine Action Support Group's (MASG) work on donor coordination in mine action, Mr. Mansfield presented the outcomes of the MASG's study on "Mine Action Coordination and Partnerships". At the global level the recommendations for improving coordination included a pro-active approach by MASG members to consultations on strategic policy considerations; the conduct of joint assessments, monitoring and evaluation; exchange of information on funding intentions, funding expectations and cost comparisons; harmonization of the reporting requirements of partners; and sharing lessons learned. Possible principles for donor coordination could include, for example, the elaboration of a national mine action policy or strategy, raising coordination issues, and ensuring accountability to the national mine action programmes. Another option at the global level

was to expand the membership of the MASG. For the promotion of coordination at the national level, the MASG could maintain a focus on countries with emerging/emergency programmes; include this issue on the agenda of MASG meetings; encouraging MASG members to take a lead donor role in support of mine affected countries; and promoting the concept of “national ownership” and “Partnership Principles”. To improve the exchange of information between its members and the broader mine action community, the MASG established a part-time Secretariat and set up a website at [www.mineactionsupportgroup.org](http://www.mineactionsupportgroup.org).

9. The Coordinator held a small group meeting with affected countries and invited several donor States to discuss the importance of national plans and ownership of clearance and victim assistance programmes at the community and national levels. Participating States were: Australia, Belarus, Canada, Croatia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Montenegro, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United States of America. During the small group meeting it was apparent that there are a wide range of needs. On one end of the scale are countries, which due to heavy contamination combined with poverty in the affected communities and demand for land have led to ongoing new casualties and victims. At the other end are countries with serious contamination, but they are not incurring new casualties and victims. Such countries may not be regarded as a priority for donor assistance. However, for both groups of States the existence of ERW contamination is an impediment to social and economic development. The majority of affected countries have established national mine action authorities, are attempting to set deadlines for the clearance of ERW and have a clear sense of their priorities. For affected countries the priorities are progressing surveillance and clearance operations, being able to respond to the needs of victims, securing munitions stockpiles and mobilising resources for these activities. In seeking assistance, affected countries must be as specific as possible in terms of outlining their priorities and needs.

### **Recommendations for the Meeting of Experts in 2014**

10. In order to further progress the work on cooperation and assistance, the Seventh Conference of the High Contracting Parties may wish to take the following decisions:

(a) To encourage those High Contracting Parties, relevant international organisations and institutions in a position to do so to provide cooperation and assistance for addressing the impact of explosive remnants of war, which continues to be the explosive devices that cause the highest numbers of new casualties and victims each year.

(b) To encourage States which have outlined their needs for assistance in either formal requests for assistance or statements to the Meeting of Experts to ensure they have specified their exact needs and provide regular updates on the status of those requests.

(c) To continue to utilise the small group meeting with affected States and donor countries to discuss the challenges and needs in the area of generic preventive measures.

(d) To encourage both donor and affected High Contracting Parties to submit information relating to Articles 7 and 8 in their national reports.