

**Eighth 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(s) of any subsidiary organ(s)

Cooperation and assistance

Submitted by the Coordinator¹ on cooperation and assistance

1. Cooperation and assistance is indispensable to the achievement of Protocol V's objectives of preventing and remedying the humanitarian suffering caused by explosive remnants of war. This is recognised in the comprehensive and detailed provisions on cooperation and assistance set out in Articles 7 and 8. In accordance with the objectives of Protocol V and the recommendations agreed to at the Seventh Conference, the session on cooperation and assistance focused on the priorities and challenges of donor States and organisations. Affected States were strongly encouraged to present their requests for assistance and detail their specific needs. The small group meeting held a discussion on the Protocol V requests for assistance form.

An overview of cooperation and assistance for mine action

2. The Landmine Monitor and Japan, as the Chair of the Mine Action Support Group, provided useful overviews of the trends in cooperation and assistance for mine action. Mine action includes assistance for addressing explosive remnants of war. Despite the global financial crisis, in 2012 the highest ever level of funding was provided with a total of US\$681 million for mine action. This figure includes the contributions of both international donors and governments supporting their own national programmes. For example, affected States such as Angola and Croatia were making significant contributions to mine action funding. The top donors included United States of America, European Union, Japan, Norway, Netherlands, Australia, Germany, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Switzerland and Sweden, whose total contributions made up 80 per cent of funding provided to mine action. The top recipient States were Afghanistan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Iraq, Somalia, Cambodia, Libya, South Sudan, Lebanon, Colombia and Angola. Recently new donor States had emerged and these included Andorra, Brazil, Liechtenstein and Monaco and Oman.

¹ Ms. Marketa Homolkova of the Czech Republic was appointed by the President-designate of the Eighth Conference as Coordinator.



3. Some of the trends in mine action support are:

(a) The majority of States regard mine action as a component of their humanitarian aid and development programmes and as contributing to building peace and security.

(b) Donor's priorities are changing and as a result they increasingly have fewer personnel involved in mine action. These changes can mean less focus and capacity for tasks such as evaluation and monitoring, field visits, and direct contacts with national mine action authorities.

(c) It is increasingly difficult to identify the contributions towards mine action as some States are channeling their funds through broader strategies such as armed violence reduction.

(d) Less funding was being directed through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund. The Mine Action Support Group would focus on both increasing funding for and improving transparency of the Voluntary Trust Fund.

4. The Landmine Monitor urged donors to coordinate their efforts as this remains a problem as demonstrated by the ongoing duplication of efforts in mine action support.

Priorities and challenges of donors

5. The following delegations provided updates on their priorities and challenges in supporting mine action: Australia, China, France, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, United Nations Development Programme and United States of America. From the presentations the key points were:

(a) For some States an objective of their support for mine action is to realise the goals set out in Protocol V, the Convention on Anti-personnel Mines and Convention on Cluster Munitions. This was referred to by Ireland, Germany and Switzerland.

(b) The majority of support in mine action is provided for surveillance and clearance of explosive remnants of war and landmines and risk education activities. For example, India and Sweden spoke about the assistance they provide in these areas. Funding for these activities increases during emergency situations.

(c) Several States emphasised the importance of capacity building. For example, France stated that capacity building is more effective than having the work carried out by a donor.

(d) Although the Landmine Monitor noted that funding for victim assistance had decreased, Australia and China specifically mentioned the support that they provide in this area.

(e) Some States do focus on specific regions. For example, Australia prioritises the most heavily affected States in the Indo-Pacific region. One of the United States' priorities is clearance of munitions in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

(f) Increasing priority is being given to destroying ammunition stockpiles, and reducing the risk of the illicit trade in munitions and their use in improvised explosive devices.

(g) Some States do focus on specific regions. For example, Australia prioritises the most heavily affected States in the Indo-Pacific region. One of the United States' priorities is clearance of munitions in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

(h) Clarifying the extent of a country's problem was underlined by Germany. When assisting a country, Germany asked questions about the extent of the problem and expected a database to be established.

(i) For UNDP the long term sustainability of mine action programmes and prioritization of resources were important. In Lao People's Democratic Republic, the enormity of problem meant that working closely with the Government and prioritization are essential. UNDP is working to support the Government's priorities and to finalise a clear baseline survey. Approximately 80 million submunitions remain uncleared in Lao People's Democratic Republic. Part of the process of surveillance has involved teams going to communities and asking if there had been victims or if people knew about contaminated areas, and was data available. Then the technical surveys were carried out from identified areas of contamination.

Affected States

6. Affected States took the opportunity of the plenary session and small group meeting to outline their needs. Burundi reported that it is seeking assistance with the safe storage of its munitions and identifying the victims of explosive remnants of war. Cambodia explained that while its focus has been on clearing landmines, explosive remnants of war remained a serious problem. Given the enormity of the challenges it was facing, Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomed any new offers of support. Despite receiving support from the United Nations Mine Action Support, Mali had a range of needs including capacity building and equipment. Zambia explained that under the Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines it has fulfilled the clearance obligations. However, Zambia is aware that explosive remnants of war contamination remains a serious problem and is seeking assistance to carry out a technical survey. Throughout the Meeting of Experts it was clear that there remain unmet needs in the areas of carrying out baseline surveys on explosive remnants of war contamination and the management of munitions sites.

Small group discussion on the requests for assistance form

7. The small group meeting of affected and key donor States was convened to provide an opportunity for a more open and informal discussion. The group discussed the requests for assistance form that had been developed under Protocol V and is available on the CCW website. Three States have utilised the form, but there was limited awareness of its existence. Donor States acknowledged that the form represented a useful first step and asked for all of the necessary information, but that donors required affected States to fulfil their own particular application processes. Suggestions were to post donors' details and a summary of affected States' needs on the CCW website.

Recommendations

8. The Eighth Conference of the Protocol V 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 encourage both donor and affected High Contracting Parties to submit information relating to Articles 7 and 8 in their national reports.

(d) The Coordinator with the assistance of the CCW Implementation Support Unit to focus on those High Contracting Parties requiring assistance with the surveillance of explosive remnants of war contamination and the management of munitions sites. The CCW Implementation Unit to be tasked with ensuring that affected States are aware of all available channels for seeking cooperation and assistance.
