



Ninth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on ERW 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 (CCW)
Geneva, 9-10 November 2015

Statement by the Delegation of Italy

Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on your appointment, and to assure you of my delegation's full support to your endeavors.

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mr President,

As a staunch believer in International Humanitarian Law for the guarantees and protection it provides in armed conflict, particularly to civilians, Italy welcomes and supports ongoing work in the framework of Protocol V to the CCW, conducted at both national and international levels.

As evinced from the reports of the thematic Coordinators – whom we warmly thank for their dedication and useful contribution – much work has been done so far. More, however, remains to be done, and some recently identified challenges to implementation must be met, particularly in the areas of clearance, risk prevention, and victims assistance.

Italy, in keeping with its history of engagement with these issues, is ready to continue supporting States Parties in their efforts.

Mr President,

Italy considers international cooperation and assistance as fundamental to attain the goals of Protocol V. In recent years we have devoted over 15m EUR to international assistance in mine action, broadly intended, with a particular focus on clearance, stockpile destruction, and assistance to victims. In 2014 alone, our Armed Forces conducted ERW clearance operations in Afghanistan and Lebanon; we supported ERW-related projects in Afghanistan, Colombia, Libya, Somalia, and the Gaza strip;

and we organized 78 training courses in Afghanistan and 3 in Kosovo, which were attended by over 800 people. Let me also recall our recent collaboration with UNRWA, for risk education activities targeting vulnerable populations in the Gaza Strip.

Victim assistance is another area in which we are particularly engaged. We understand this not only as providing medical and physical rehabilitation services, but also as assisting victims to find a new place in their social and economic environment. We, therefore, greatly welcome efforts by States Parties to promote the employment of victims and their insertion in society without discrimination. In this context, let me recall the relevance of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We also greatly support the sharing of experiences with other instruments that also contain victim assistance obligations – most notably the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

We believe that broadly understood problems, as those targeted by the Protocol's commitments, can translate into very specific challenges when it comes to national contexts. For this reason, we encourage potential recipients to identify and communicate their specific needs, with a view to tailoring assistance to the greatest possible extent. In this light, we also welcome the working paper by the Coordinator on cooperation and assistance, containing an update on requests from affected States and available resources.

Mr President,

As in many other disarmament or arms control instruments, national reporting is fundamental to gauge progress in Protocol V implementation and the only means to ensure transparency – hence generate trust – among States Parties. We note with regret that for 2014 the previously growing trend of report submissions has decreased, and call on all States Parties to participate in the reporting mechanism. In this regard, we thank the ISU and the Coordinator on national reporting for their efforts in assisting states that might encounter difficulties with submitting their yearly report.

Next year the Review Conference will provide an opportunity to take further stock of the work conducted in implementation of Protocol V and to outline future steps. In order to maximize the use of time and allow for proper preparations, we support the proposal presented last September by yourself and the President of Protocol II, to hold one meeting for each Protocol – instead of two – and one day of Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference.

Thank you, Mr President
