



Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War additional 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

Meeting of Experts
Geneva, 6-7 April 2016

**Statement by the Delegation of Italy
International Cooperation and Assistance**

Madam Coordinator,

Let me start by thanking you and Mr Mercado of Argentina for your contribution and efforts to set the bases for a productive discussion today.

Since this is the first time that Italy takes the floor, I would also like to congratulate Bahrein for becoming a State Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and for joining Protocol V.

Madam Coordinator,

As a staunch believer in International Humanitarian Law, and a Party to Protocol V, Italy remains deeply concerned by the humanitarian impacts of Explosive Remnants of War, and actively engaged in their mitigation. We welcome the ongoing work in the framework of the Protocol, conducted at national and international levels. We also continue supporting States Parties' efforts in this regard, through our long-standing investment in international cooperation and assistance.

The Italian contribution to ERW-related activities is channeled through a dedicated Trust Fund for Humanitarian Demining. Created in 2001, the Fund is destined to finance mine action activities in a broad sense, including those relating to landmines and cluster munitions. In addition to targeting any kind of ERW, our mine action programmes also pursue both short-term goals (such as clearance and stockpile destruction) and long-term ones (such as victim assistance and mine risk education).

Since its creation, the Fund has allocated more than 45m EUR to international assistance in mine action, with a special focus on clearance, stockpile destruction, and assistance to victims. In 2015, the amount allocated to the Fund totaled 3.4m Eur, which included support for ERW clearing activities conducted by UNMAS in the Gaza Strip and in Colombia. In 20015, other recipients of Italian Mine Action assistance were Afghanistan, Bosnia, Syria, Somalia, and Sudan.

Where possible, we provide support in the form of the exchange of experience and practical know-how, in addition to providing financial resources. In 2014, for example, our Armed Forces were directly involved in clearance operations in Afghanistan and Lebanon. We also organized 78 training courses in Afghanistan and 3 in Kosovo, which were attended by over 800 people.

We believe that broadly understood problems, such as those targeted by Protocol V'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.

Thank you
