



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

Eleventh Conference
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**Statement by Palma D'Ambrosio
Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

General exchange of views

Mr. President,

At the outset let me congratulate you on your appointment and thank you for the proposal on national reporting, which we have carefully considered.

Let me also congratulate Afghanistan on recently becoming a State Party to the CCW and all its Protocols, including Protocol V.

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, 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 this 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, which finances activities targeting any explosive remnants of war, including landmines, cluster munitions, and Improvised Explosive Devices. Since 2001, when the Fund was established, we have allocated close to 50m EUR to mine action programmes, focusing on clearance, stockpile destruction and assistance to victims. Only in 2016, recipients included Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Somalia, and Sudan, for an overall amount of financial assistance close to 3m EUR. For 2017, we are confirming the same level of overall resources as last year.

Where possible, we provide support in the form of the exchange of experience and practical know-how, in addition to providing financial resources. Last year, for instance, the Italian Armed Forces contingents operating in international missions have recovered and destroyed ERWs in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Lebanon. Italy also organized six courses on demining and mine

awareness in Afghanistan; four courses on EOD awareness in Kosovo; and training on mine awareness for 383 Military Police Officers in Somalia.

Victim assistance, which we understand comprehensively, is another key component of Italian-funded mine action programmes. Victim assistance activities target ERW survivors, their families, and other people with disabilities; they focus on both victims' psycho-physical rehabilitation and on their socio-economic protection and reintegration. Finally, Italian-funded VA programmes focus on mine-risk education as a key component of prevention.

Mr. President,

The management of munitions sites is another fundamental area of work for Protocol V. The securing of stored munitions is of primary importance for the safety of military personnel operating on site, as well as of nearby civilian populations and installations. We believe that the adoption of practical safety measures and standards should be accompanied by awareness-raising activities focusing on the risks of unplanned explosions in munitions sites and of the diversion of munitions.

In Italy, standardized procedures for munitions sites management are established by national laws, and detailed through regulations by each Service of our Armed Forces, which also take into account the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. Such procedures include provisions on regular safety and security checks, access rules by personnel and registration, munitions records and inspections.

Finally, Mr. President, we concur with your assessment that national reporting under Protocol V serves many useful purposes, including building confidence and allowing us to understand progress made in implementing the Protocol and associated challenges.

For this reason, we welcome your proposal to task the CCW Implementation Support Unit to explore avenues to provide expert assistance on national reporting to requesting States Parties. We agree that this task would fall into the general ISU mandate to support Protocol V implementation. At the same time, and in line with your proposal, we believe that any financing needed in the framework of these activities should be provided on a voluntary basis.

Thank you, Mr. President
