



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

**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**

Thirteenth Conference of the High Contracting Parties
Geneva, 11 November 2019

Agenda item 8: General exchange of views

**Statement by Amb. Gianfranco Incarnato
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

Madam President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your appointment and assure you of our full support and cooperation.

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

Madam President,

Italy remains deeply concerned by the indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic impacts of explosive remnants of war, especially on civilians. We therefore welcome ongoing work in the framework of Protocol V and support efforts to enhance its implementation and promote its universalization.

We also attach great importance to national reporting, which serves many useful purposes, including building confidence and allowing us to understand progress made in implementing the Protocol. We therefore encourage all High Contracting Parties to fulfil their reporting obligations in a timely and effective manner.

Madam President,

We strongly believe in the importance of international cooperation in this particular field, in order to support States Parties' implementation of Protocol V through our long-standing commitment. Our contribution to ERW-related activities is channeled through a dedicated Trust Fund for Humanitarian Demining, which finances programmes targeting landmines, IEDs and explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions. Since the establishment of the Fund in 2001, Italy has devoted more than 58 million Euros to Mine Action programmes, focusing on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education, and victim assistance.

Italy provides financial support to humanitarian demining projects according to an integrated approach, which couples clearance activities with preventative measures aiming to promote risk awareness of communities living in ERW-affected territories. Italian-funded interventions, therefore, include mine-risk education activities in schools, universities and community recreational centers. Recently, for instance, we have supported such initiatives in Ukraine, through UNICEF.

Within the framework of international military operations, theatre deployment includes the dispatch of first aid units for any kind of assistance, including for the treatment of local military personnel and civilians victims of explosive ordnance.

Madame President,

We believe that victim assistance should be comprehensive and based on the principle of non-discrimination. The projects Italy supports adopt a long-term approach, through the provision of emergency and ongoing medical and psychological support – including the provision of prostheses and physical rehabilitation – coupled with professional training for local medical staff and socio-economic assistance for the startup of small production activities. We also deem it essential to include assistance to the victims in broader development, human rights and humanitarian programs, so that it can fully contribute to, and benefit from, efforts towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We have been particularly engaged in promoting gender- and diversity-responsive assistance, aiming to adequately address the different needs of different beneficiaries. Italy supported the development of an operational guidance by the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP), in collaboration with Humanity and Inclusion, aiming to disseminate good practices for gender and diversity-sensitive victim assistance among stakeholders in the mine action and broader disability sectors.

Our assistance programmes rely on partnerships with the UN, other international and regional organizations, civil society, and survivor representatives. We are convinced that such partnerships must be developed and strengthened among States and all the relevant stakeholders, maximizing the contribution and impact of all available expertise and knowledge.

Madam President,

The management of munitions sites is another fundamental area of work for Protocol V. Securing 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, with serious security implications.

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.

Thank you, Madam President.