



United-Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

**Seventh Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to
the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
Geneva, 11-12 November 2013
Protocol V**

Statement on Generic Preventive Measures

**Delivered by UNMAS on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-
MA)**

Mister President/Mister Coordinator

On behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA) we wish to express our support for the continuation of the work on generic preventive measures under Protocol V.

An element of Protocol V's success was its comprehensive approach to addressing explosive remnants of war, with both a set of post-conflict remedial measures and also generic preventive measures, including those measures set out in Article 9 and Part III of the Technical Annex to prevent munitions from becoming ERW in the first place. Generic preventive measures cover the entire life cycle of munitions and include design, manufacturing, testing, storage, record keeping, in-site surveillance, transportation and handling, and training for users. Indeed CCW High Contracting Parties broke new ground when they agreed to include generic preventive measures as part of Protocol V's obligations.

Since 2011, there have been over 76 reported ammunition stockpile explosions. At least 800 people have been killed, and thousands more have been injured. Making progress in this area remains a major challenge. Too many States see excess stockpiles as assets rather than liabilities. Some States are unwilling to dispose of ageing and fragile munitions stockpiles and may regard such matters as being sensitive. Also, the overall management of munitions may simply not be a priority for many States. Therefore, all efforts from different regional and multilateral fora dealing with this issue are needed if real progress is to be made.

The unsafe storage and poor record keeping of munitions during an armed conflict can result in such materials being diverted for producing improvised explosive devices and mean that the post conflict recovery from an armed conflict is even more hazardous and challenging.

Therefore, the IACG-MA considers that there is still space and a need for further consultations on generic preventive measures in this forum. Focusing on identifying focal points within countries,

practical workshops, follow-up with individual States, which have not reported on their implementation of generic preventive measures and greater awareness raising, would be constructive proposals for taking forward what is a very technical and often complex area.

The United Nations is concerned about the issue of munitions management, their safety and security. These concerns are raised in various reports by the Secretary-General, including the recently issued report on assistance in mine action (A/68/305). The report underscores that the landscape in which the United Nations mine action operates has evolved as the result of the threat posed by improvised explosive devices, unsecured and unsafe ammunition stockpiles and the circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons. The same report highlights that the United Nations stand ready to provide expert and technical support to affected countries and looks forward to continued cooperation among United Nations partners in the development of policies and instruments designed to respond to these security threats at the country level.

Though it is not the only framework to discuss generic preventive measures, Protocol V is nevertheless in our view a relevant forum to continue addressing these issues of concern.

Thank you.