

**GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS OF
THE STATES PARTIES 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**

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Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines

Detectability of mines

Prepared by the Russian Federation

1. Many discussions are taking place nowadays on the issue of the detectability of mines. In the process, however, only one aspect is taken into account which relates to the mine itself, namely that the mines should incorporate in their construction at least 8 grammes of iron. The Russian delegation has repeatedly explained its position with regard to this approach. It was confirmed at the UNMAS presentation on mines being cleared in Angola. In our view, this problem has to be considered from a wider perspective and with due regard for the prospects of developing technical means of detection. The reasons are as follows.
2. The induction mine detector is regarded as the main means of detecting mines, but it is not an ideal instrument.
3. In modern combat conditions, when a locality is saturated with a vast quantity of metal fragments, such a mine detector is of little effectiveness and a mine clearing operation using such a detector is extremely exhausting and requires much time.

4. The Russian Federation has information to the effect that many States are already shifting to different technical means of mine detection which have the capacity to detect a mine not on the basis of the presence of 8 grammes of iron, but by other indicators. For example, it seems to be preferable, especially in the long term, to use effective means of mine detection based on other physical principles - the so-called direct means based on the presence of explosive substances (such as neutron detectors, detectors of fumes from explosives, etc.).

5. In this connection the question arises of whether it is sensible to modernize mines now with a view to ensuring their detectability by induction mine detectors, given that the need for this will disappear in the very near future. The Russian Federation has already indicated that, by our estimates, the modernization of one mine would cost US\$ 10-20. So, maybe it would be more appropriate to invest that money in new technical means for mine detection and detectability?

6. The existing requirements set out in Amended Protocol II and in the submitted draft protocols with regard to other mines point towards the use of induction mine detectors which have little effect in today's conditions because of the great number of false activation cases (due to interference). In practice, that results in situations where a combat engineer becomes extremely tired and as a consequence his safety decreases.

7. We would like to have a more detailed discussion among the delegations on this problem at the meeting of the group of experts, including the issue of international cooperation aimed at developing new effective means of detecting mines for use in humanitarian mine clearance operations.
