

**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**

CCW/GGE/X/WG.2/WP.3  
10 March 2005

Original: ENGLISH

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**Tenth Session**

**Geneva, 7 – 11 March 2005**

Item 8 of the agenda

**Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM)**

**Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM)**

**Wrap up of the Meeting of the Military Experts on MOTAPM**

Prepared by the Chairperson of the Meeting of the Military Experts on MOTAPM

1. The military experts held once again a very lively and constructive session. The common ground was deepened in some issues, while there are still areas where difficulties exist. The military experts discussed three principle packages:
  - (a) minefield protection,
  - (b) mine technology, and
  - (c) protection of civilians and transfers
2. Principles of minefield protection were divided into three issues:
  - (a) minefields should be monitored by military,
  - (b) minefields should be recorded in detail, and
  - (c) minefields should be protected by fencing, marking or other means to effectively exclude civilians to stray into them
3. Military monitoring was widely recognized to be a key element in guarding minefields and preventing civilians accidentally to stray into them. It is naturally a part of the force protection too. The recording of minefields was raised by several experts to be also of great importance and a technical annex of recording could be included into the final instrument, although there are some provisions already in the Amended Protocol II. The Meeting of Military Experts heard an excellent presentation by Austria on minefield recording and marking. The military monitoring and recording are the two actions that are always carried out when mines are laid.

4. The principles of mine technology were divided to two issues:

- (i) mines should be detectable, and
- (ii) mines should have limited life-span

5. The discussion widened to discuss also, as expected, fuse design and anti- handling devices. Detectability still divides opinions and some delegations find non- detectable mines to have military importance. With certain exceptions this problem could be solved. Several delegations pointed out, that there are more advanced mine detectors available than the usual metal detectors that could make humanitarian mine clearing more effective and less costly. This should be taken under consideration in an appropriate way and mentioned in a future instrument.

6. The question of persistence of mines also dividing opinions. Many countries are with good reason concerned about the increasing costs when purchasing new mines or modifying the old ones. The use of persistent mines could be solved, with an exception, if used within perimeter marked areas monitored by military or protected by other means. Anyhow, the common future goal seems to be that the bulk of anti-vehicle mines in operational use have limited life-span.

7. The “best practice” of fuse design is widely supported as well as of anti- handling devices. The presentation of visualising operational impacts of proposed detectability and fusing standards was very helpful in understanding how the battlefield conditions are reflecting mine technology. The transition period is necessary, when meeting the demands to change mine technology. The Meeting heard a good presentation of the military procurement system that showed clearly why the transition period within AVMs should be lengthy. As to how the transition period will be counted, should be considered separately.

8. The principles for the protection of civilians and transfers were divided in two topics:

- (i) all feasible measures should be taken to protect civilians moving close to mined areas, and
- (ii) non- detectable mines should not be transferred and restraint should be exercised regarding transfers of mines with-out limited life- span

9. The protection of civilians was stated to be of greatest importance when mines are used. The transfers were only slightly discussed, but the common feeling is that mines should not be delivered to anyone else than to a State or State Agency. Some countries have already stopped all transfers.

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