

**Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties  
to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War 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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**Geneva, 9–10 November 2009**

**Summary record of the 1st meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 9 November 2009, at 10 a.m.

*Temporary President:* Mr. Sareva (Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament  
and Director of the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs)

*President:* Mr. Rao..... (India)

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Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this Conference will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the Conference.

*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

### **Opening of the Conference**

1. **The Temporary President** declared open the Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War 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. He noted with satisfaction that 61 countries had so far notified their consent to be bound by Protocol V, called on those States that had not yet done so to consider consenting to be bound as soon as possible and warmly congratulated Italy on having recently ratified the Protocol. At the first two Conferences, the High Contracting Parties had made significant progress towards converting Protocol V into an effective tool for addressing the humanitarian and development impact of explosive remnants of war and had established a flexible framework for international cooperation and assistance. Efforts would now focus on reviewing the Protocol's operation and status, and further improving the machinery for its implementation.

### **Election of the President**

2. **The Temporary President** recalled that, at the Second Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, it had been decided to nominate Ambassador Hamid Ali Rao of India as President of the Third Conference, as indicated in paragraph 49 of the final document of the Second Conference (CCW/P.V/CONF/2008/12). He took it that the Conference wished to confirm the nomination.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. *Mr. Rao (India) took the Chair.*

### **Adoption of the agenda (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/1)**

5. **The President** drew attention to the provisional agenda, which was contained in annex II to the final document of the Second Conference and had also been issued as a separate document under the symbol CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/1. He took it that the Conference wished to adopt the provisional agenda.

6. *It was so decided.*

### **Confirmation of the rules of procedure**

7. **The President** recalled that the rules of procedure for Conferences of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, which had been adopted at the First Conference on the recommendation of its Preparatory Committee, were contained in annex II to the final document of the First Conference (CCW/P.V/CONF/2007/1). He took it that the Conference wished to confirm the rules of procedure.

8. *It was so decided.*

### **Appointment of the Secretary-General of the Conference**

9. **The President**, referring to rule 10 of the rules of procedure, said that, in accordance with established practice, Mr. Peter Kolarov of the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs had been nominated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to serve as Secretary-General of the Conference. He took it that the Conference wished to appoint Mr. Kolarov to that office.

10. *It was so decided.*

**Organization of work including that of any subsidiary bodies of the Conference**

11. **The President** recalled that, at the First Conference, it had been decided to establish an informal meeting of experts to serve as an implementation mechanism for Protocol V. The meeting of experts had been held in Geneva from 22 to 24 April 2009, and the work of the Third Conference would focus on its findings. Bearing that in mind, and in view of the brevity of the Conference, he saw no need for the establishment of any additional subsidiary body at the current stage.

12. Drawing attention to the provisional programme of work (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/8), which was intended to be flexible, he suggested that agenda items 9 to 13 should be considered together, along with the issue of universalization of Protocol V, under the general exchange of views. Subsequently, the outcome of the work of the meeting of experts would be considered topic by topic, on the basis of a report to be introduced by the respective Coordinator of the meeting of experts, who would chair the ensuing thematic discussion. The topics to be discussed were: cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance; the article 4 generic electronic template; national reporting; victim assistance; clearance; and generic preventive measures. At the end of each thematic discussion, the approval of the Conference would be sought on the recommendations made in the relevant report. The recommendations approved would serve as a roadmap for the implementation of Protocol V. They would be included in the final document of the Conference and would constitute its outcome.

13. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Conference wished to proceed in the manner just described and to adopt the provisional programme of work.

14. *It was so decided.*

**Election of other officers of the Conference**

15. **The President** recalled that, at the Second Conference, it had been decided to nominate representatives of Australia and Slovenia as Vice-Presidents of the Third Conference, as reflected in paragraph 49 of the final document of the Second Conference (CCW/P.V/CONF/2008/12). On the basis of preliminary consultations, there appeared to be agreement to elect Ambassador Caroline Millar of Australia and Mr. Bostjan Jerman of Slovenia as Vice-Presidents of the Third Conference. He took it that the Conference wished to confirm those nominations.

16. *It was so decided.*

**Adoption of arrangements for meeting the costs of the Conference**

17. **The President** recalled that the cost estimates for the Third Conference had been considered at the Second Conference and recommended for adoption, as indicated in paragraph 50 of the final document of the Second Conference; they were contained in annex VI thereto. The costs had been estimated on the basis of anticipated workload. The actual costs would be determined after the closure of the Conference, when the exact workload was known. He took it that the financial arrangements for the Conference were acceptable and could be adopted.

18. *It was so decided.*

**Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations**

19. **Mr. Duarte** (United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs) read out a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

20. In his message, the Secretary-General said that armed conflict left in its wake not only chaos, grief and hardship, but also explosive remnants of war that killed and maimed long after the end of hostilities. Protocol V provided the legal framework for helping to eliminate that deadly hazard, and he congratulated the High Contracting Parties on having established machinery for its implementation. He encouraged them to make full use of that machinery to facilitate assistance and improve knowledge of the scope of the problem and how to deal with it. He also encouraged the sharing of information on the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance, whether bilaterally, through the United Nations, or through any other appropriate entity, and urged the Parties to further operationalize the plan of action adopted at the Second Conference, including through stronger measures to help victims.

21. **The Secretary-General** was encouraged by the considerable increase in the number of High Contracting Parties to the Protocol since 2008. He commended the 61 States that had expressed their consent to be bound by the Protocol and called on those States that had not yet done so to ratify Protocol V without delay. He reminded all States of their responsibility to provide effective protection to civilian populations both during and after armed conflicts; the United Nations would assist them in their efforts.

### **General exchange of views**

#### **Review of the status and operation of the Protocol**

#### **Consideration of matters pertaining to national implementation of the Protocol, including national reporting or updating on an annual basis**

#### **Preparation for review conferences**

#### **Report(s) of any subsidiary organ(s)**

22. Before opening the floor for the general exchange of views, **the President** congratulated the 13 new High Contracting Parties to Protocol V: Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Georgia, Latvia, Mali, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America. More States were expected to accede to the Protocol in the months ahead, which demonstrated that the efforts to strengthen the universality of the instrument had been successful. Further efforts were required, however, particularly within the framework of the plan of action to promote the universality of the Convention.

23. **Mr. Wingren** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that large numbers of civilians were killed or injured each year by explosive remnants of war, and the presence of unexploded and abandoned explosive ordnance had grave consequences for civilians and their communities. Protocol V had been concluded to help address those serious post-conflict problems. The adoption of the Protocol, and its entry into force in November 2006, had shown that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons remained a living and important instrument of international humanitarian law.

24. There had been steady progress in the implementation of Protocol V, including the adoption and refinement of a mechanism for national reporting and the establishment of procedures for exchanging information, including requests for assistance. A plan of action on victim assistance had been adopted, and consideration of clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war was continuing.

25. He welcomed the progress made by the informal meeting of experts in respect of generic preventive measures, notably the elaboration of a draft guide for the implementation of part 3 of the technical annex. The European Union wished to see that

work completed during the coming year. It would also welcome the early approval of the draft guide to assist High Contracting Parties in their national reporting. All Parties should take full advantage of that document, and those Parties that had not yet done so should meet their reporting obligations under the Protocol.

26. The strict and effective implementation of the provisions of article 4 of the Protocol on the recording, retaining and transmission of information on the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance was crucial. In that connection, the European Union welcomed the experts' discussion on the article 4 generic electronic template and looked forward to continuing the exchange on national practices and experience in implementing article 4, including the use of the template.

27. The presentations made at the meeting of experts concerning clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war had been most useful, in particular those by States in need of assistance and those by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Clearance of explosive remnants of war remained a core issue of the Protocol. Thus, further discussions on the topic were needed, notably on national practices in recording information concerning the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance and on the impact of such information on clearance of contaminated areas.

28. It was clear from the experts' deliberations on cooperation and assistance and victim assistance that, in order to implement the Protocol and pursue its humanitarian aim more effectively, possible practical synergies with other instruments of international humanitarian law should be identified. Furthermore, in order to achieve an efficient and targeted implementation of the plan of action on victim assistance and to match cooperation and assistance successfully, greater efforts were needed at the national level to understand the scale of the problem and the real state of implementation on the ground.

29. As for the universality of Protocol V, there had been marked progress since the previous Conference, with the accession of 13 new States. However, further efforts were required. In that context, he recalled the European Union's Joint Action of 2007 to promote the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols through seminars that had allowed the sharing of knowledge and experience in many regions.

30. The European Union attached great importance to the effective implementation of Protocol V. States should be encouraged to adopt regulations and practices that would promote its aims. Over the years, the States members of the European Union had provided important financial assistance for mine action and clearance of explosive remnants of war, and would continue to do so. They looked forward to a productive Conference and wished to assure the leadership of their full support.

31. **Mr. Al Zaabi** (United Arab Emirates) said that the ratification of the Convention and its Protocols following the promulgation of a national decree in 2008 had been an important step for the United Arab Emirates in joining the international efforts to promote peace and security in the aftermath of war and conflicts. The United Arab Emirates would do its utmost to abide by the provisions of the instruments, including by bringing its national laws into line with them.

32. **Ms. Millar** (Australia) said that her delegation looked forward to cooperating with the President of the Conference and the States represented in order to ensure a successful outcome. The discussions held at the 2009 meeting of experts and the related Coordinators' reports demonstrated the usefulness of the informal implementation mechanism. She trusted that the Coordinators would continue to provide leadership in their respective areas and looked forward to discussing the recommendations they had proposed.

33. While she welcomed the accession of new High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, much work remained to be done to achieve the universalization of the instrument.

34. Her Government had taken the necessary steps to fully implement the provisions of the Protocol by updating the doctrine of the Australian Defence Force in relation to explosive ordnance and complying with the Protocol's requirements in all aspects of operational planning, including targeting. It was working to implement the preventive measures set out in part 3 of the technical annex to the Protocol during the entire life cycle of explosive ordnance. It maintained a robust ordnance management regime, with samples of ordnance stocks inspected and tested regularly so as to ensure they met international standards.

35. Her Government was equally committed to fulfilling its obligations under article 8 of the Protocol on cooperation and assistance. Its mine action strategy, with pledged funding of 75 million Australian dollars, had helped to reduce the human suffering and socio-economic impact of landmines and other explosive remnants of war in Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and Africa. A new strategy for action on landmines was being developed and would be announced shortly.

36. The cooperation and assistance projects supported by her Government included a community-based initiative to tackle landmines and explosive remnants of war in Afghanistan, victim assistance centres in Iraq and a partnership with civil society in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to help disabled persons better understand their rights. Additional information on the implementation of the Protocol was contained in Australia's national report.

37. Protocol V provided the High Contracting Parties with a tool to address concerns relating to explosive remnants of war, and she urged all States to consent to be bound by the instrument as soon as possible.

38. **Mr. Wang Qun** (Observer for China) said that, since the entry into force of Protocol V in 2006, the universality of the instrument had been continuously enhanced, including through relevant international exchanges, and assistance and cooperation in the area of explosive remnants of war. The progress made demonstrated that the Protocol struck a good balance between military and security needs and humanitarian concerns, reflected the common understanding of all parties and was a comprehensive and practical instrument that strengthened the effectiveness of the CCW framework in resolving arms control issues with a humanitarian dimension.

39. To date his delegation had participated actively as an observer and had engaged in useful exchanges and cooperation with all stakeholders. It welcomed the discussions held and agreements reached during the 2009 meeting of experts and hoped that all concerned would continue to work together to strengthen the universality and effectiveness of the Protocol. His Government was committed to China's becoming a party to Protocol V as soon as possible and would endeavour to conclude the ratification process swiftly.

40. **Mr. Manfredi** (Italy) said that, following its recent ratification of Protocol V, Italy was now a signatory to all the Protocols to the Convention; that was in line with its commitment to increasing the effectiveness of multilateral efforts in the field of disarmament and to the progressive universalization of the relevant instruments.

41. **Mr. Khokher** (Pakistan) said that the addition of Protocol V to the CCW framework had further expanded the scope of the Convention, enhanced its significance and strengthened international humanitarian law. The Protocol would help to reduce the suffering of people around the globe. Pakistan had ratified the Protocol with that conviction and was attending the Conference for the first time as a High Contracting Party. Its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Protocol was borne out by the fact that the texts of the Convention and its Protocols were available in military libraries, headquarters and schools. The curricula and standing operating procedures of the armed

forces were prepared in conformity with the Protocol, and all possible steps were taken to educate the civilian population about the instrument.

42. The universalization and effective implementation of the Convention and all its Protocols must remain key objectives of the Conference, and the President and the five Coordinators had an important role to play in that regard. He expressed appreciation for the Coordinators' efforts to generate discussions and build consensus and looked forward to fruitful exchanges on their reports.

43. The implementation of Protocol V was still at an embryonic stage. The Conference should therefore consolidate the work already being done under the Protocol and refrain from expanding the scope of reporting. Nominating additional coordinators and friends would not add any value to its work.

44. **Mr. MacBride** (Observer for Canada) said that Canada had ratified Protocol V in May 2009 and would become a High Contracting Party on 19 November 2009; it had thus ratified all the Protocols to the Convention and the amendments thereto. He noted that only 48 High Contracting Parties to the Convention had done so, and that, of the 110 High Contracting Parties, only 61 had ratified Protocol V. He urged other States to take that step as soon as possible.

45. Canada's ratification of Protocol V was an indication of the importance it attached to CCW as a forum for addressing conventional weapons that took account of both humanitarian needs and military considerations. Nonetheless, too much weight was often placed on military considerations at the expense of humanitarian needs. For that reason, Canada had chosen to be bound by the provisions of the Ottawa Convention on landmines and had signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which it expected to ratify in the coming months. In that vein, he encouraged those States that had not yet done so, to accede to, sign or ratify those instruments, which did so much to lessen the risk to the innocent.

46. **Mr. Varma** (India) said that it was a privilege for India to hold the presidency of the Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V. India was fully committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the humanitarian principles it embodied. It had presided over the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention when Protocol V had been negotiated and had been 1 of the first 20 countries to ratify the Protocol, leading to its entry into force. India believed that the fulfilment by States of their obligations under the Protocol would make a real difference on the ground. He was pleased to note that the number of High Contracting Parties had increased to 61. Universalization should continue to be a priority in the coming year.

47. Timely submission of national reports under Protocol V was vital. His Government was taking follow-up action on the revised generic electronic template for the effective implementation of article 4, which would be adopted at the national level and disseminated to the Indian Armed Forces. It paid particular attention to the use of generic preventive measures to ensure the safety and security of munitions throughout their life cycle. Various guidelines, including the United Nations classification system of hazard divisions and compatibility groups were used extensively by the Indian Armed Forces.

48. He commended all the Coordinators on their efforts in preparing for the Conference. The working papers and proposals they had drafted were a good basis for discussions. Since the Protocol was still a new instrument, States should be mindful of the importance of early universal accession and full implementation of existing obligations under it.

49. **Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation) said that his Government attached great importance to Protocol V, which was already helping to deal more effectively with problems arising from the transformation of munitions into explosive remnants of war. The project also enhanced the status of the CCW process by showing that it was capable of

rising to new humanitarian challenges. The result of a complex compromise and intense debate, Protocol V could serve as a model for future agreements. It was based on the underlying principles of the Convention, which ensured a balance between humanitarian, military and economic needs. The proper implementation of the Protocol could help to eliminate a range of humanitarian concerns, including problems arising from the use of cluster munitions.

50. His Government complied fully with the provisions of Protocol V, deactivating tens of thousands of explosive remnants of war each year, organizing regular public awareness-raising campaigns, reforming the legislative framework and implementing a range of measures within the Russian Armed Forces. It stood ready to provide assistance with international demining and deactivation efforts and with the training of specialists.

51. Extensive areas of Russian territory were still contaminated by explosive remnants of war from the Second World War. Their clearance required considerable financial and human resources; international cooperation would therefore be welcome. Detailed information on the implementation of the Protocol, including important activities undertaken during and after the conflict in the Caucasus region in 2008, was contained in the national report of the Russian Federation.

52. His Government commended the preparatory process for the Third Conference and welcomed the outcome of the 2009 meeting of experts, whose recommendations on reporting methods under Protocol V (CCW.P.V/CONF/2009/4/Add.1) it had taken duly into account. The report on victim assistance (CCW/P.V/CONF/2008/3) was particularly important. The matter had been touched on in his country's national report, which referred to the adoption of a federal programme to assist disabled persons. It would, however, deal separately with the questionnaire on victim assistance contained in the annex to the report.

53. In the light of the many regional conflicts, Protocol V would play an increasingly important role in the future. For that reason, his Government was in favour of its universalization.

54. **Mr. Grinevich** (Belarus) said that, since the entry into force of Protocol V for Belarus in March 2009, his Government had submitted a request for assistance to deal with explosive remnants of war and a national report on the implementation of the Protocol.

55. Belarus had a particular problem with explosive remnants of war dating from the Second World War, which had so far caused more than 6,100 casualties. His Government was committed to overcoming the problem and had adopted the necessary legislation and allocated substantial resources for clearance operations. The main agencies responsible for such activities were the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior. Since 1945, a total of 27 million explosive remnants of war had been cleared, and mobile engineer teams from the two Ministries continued to respond to requests for clearance from the local population. The scale of the problem was clearly illustrated in the national report; it should be noted, however, that in the first nine months of 2009 approximately 15,000 items of unexploded ordnance had been destroyed. The threat posed by such items was more acute in Belarus than in other European countries.

56. In 2000, a United Nations mission to assess the situation had concluded that Belarus required international assistance to deal with problems relating to unexploded ordnance. Specific details of the type of assistance required were contained in the request for assistance submitted by his Government.

57. **Mr. Song Seong-jong** (Republic of Korea) expressed satisfaction that the Protocol V database of national reports and their annual updates had been successfully implemented. The Republic of Korea had submitted its first national report. As reflected in the report, his



Government had issued instructions on the management of explosive remnants of war to enable the Ministry of National Defence to clear, remove or destroy them swiftly.

58. In the two years since the First Conference, the meeting of experts had made much progress in facilitating the exchange of information on the effects of explosive remnants of war and in providing a framework for assistance in addressing the problem. He expressed his sincere thanks to the Coordinators for their work and his hope that their recommendations and reports would be given due consideration so that the Third Conference would be able to devise a pragmatic roadmap for the implementation of the Protocol.

59. **Mr. León Collazos** (Peru) said that, on 2 June 2009, Peru had acceded to the Protocol as a demonstration of its firm commitment to international disarmament and international humanitarian law. He called on all those States that had not yet done so to accede to Protocol V without delay.

60. **Mr. Clark** (United Nations Mine Action Service) speaking on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Team, commended the High Contracting Parties and the Coordinators for their work in promoting the Protocol's implementation. A culture of recording the use and abandonment of explosive ordnance, as stipulated in article 4, had to be solidly established if Protocol V was to remain relevant in future conflict situations. He supported the continuous review of the generic electronic template and wished to encourage the use of the template for recording purposes. Such information should be shared in order to ensure a rapid initiation of follow-on mine activities once hostilities ended.

61. As for generic preventive measures, there was an urgent need to focus on ammunition storage. Unintended explosions of ammunition depots and stockpiles were a matter of particular concern because of their serious humanitarian and socio-economic consequences. The Conference should include a plan of action on victim assistance under Protocol V and should adopt the draft guide on national reporting. It was encouraging that 61 countries had acceded to the Protocol, that 3 had already requested assistance in the context of Protocol V and that 1 observer State had announced the transmission of bombing data during a recent conflict.

62. **Mr. Maresca** (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) said that the adoption of the Protocol had established a new framework for minimizing civilian casualties from explosive remnants of war. In 2009, the Group of Governmental Experts had begun identifying some of the important issues relating to the Protocol's implementation. He commended the Coordinators for developing and managing a very substantive expert programme and devising tools to assist in the filing of national reports and to ensure consideration of requests for assistance from affected countries.

63. The adoption of the plan of action on victim assistance had been another important step forwards, as the Protocol itself contained no operative requirements in that area. The plan provided an additional component to the international framework for addressing the needs of those injured by landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

64. In June 2009, ICRC and the Norwegian Red Cross had held a meeting involving professionals dealing with weapon victims, representatives of international organizations and individual survivors to discuss how best to put international legal commitments with respect to explosive remnants of war into practice so as to improve the quality of life of those affected by them. Practical recommendations had been adopted for both affected countries and donor States. The recommendations set out an approach to victim assistance consistent inter alia with the Ottawa Convention on Landmines, the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions and Protocol V. The participants had agreed that States must give far greater priority to assisting weapon victims and other disabled persons and had highlighted

the need to include victim assistance in national development plans, improve health and social services and provide equal access to employment and education.

65. The expert work on Protocol V should intensify in the coming year and should address the problems caused by existing explosive remnants of war. As several requests for assistance in that area had already been filed, Protocol V could now establish itself as an important instrument that dealt with the wide range of unexploded ordnance not specifically covered by other agreements. He urged all States not yet party to the Protocol to accede to it as a matter of urgency.

*Thematic discussion on cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance  
(CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/6)*

66. **Mr. Somogyi** (Hungary), speaking as coordinator on cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance, introduced the related report, which was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/6. In April 2009, the meeting of experts had discussed with the information technology services of the United Nations and other possible partners, ways of establishing a web-based information system for Protocol V (WISP.V). The idea of using a web-based information system had been well received, not only in respect of Protocol V but also for other treaty mechanisms. In October 2009, the relevant United Nations services had informed him that they had already purchased software for such systems. As a result, the High Contracting Parties could make use of the software without having to pay for its purchase. He therefore proposed that the Conference should support option III described in his report for the creation of WISP.V. Since the anticipated costs would no longer be incurred, that option had become the least expensive and most convenient. He noted that with the launching of a new information system, an additional coordinator would be required to deal with the information tools.

67. Regarding requests for assistance, he paid tribute to Belarus, Serbia and Ukraine, which had already submitted requests and had made good use of the formats for request for assistance. The addition of two columns, a priority column and a completed programme column, to form B (Appraisal of needs), as proposed in his reports, would make the information provided both more transparent and more useful. As some requests contained over 100 projects, prioritization was definitely required, and since the information on the form related to ongoing activities, it was important to be able to see which programmes had been completed.

68. Concerning cooperation and assistance, some 15 countries, along with the United Nations Mine Action Service and the United States European Command, had taken part in the seminar held in June 2009 in Budapest on explosive remnants of war. Since the participating countries included five that were not High Contracting Parties, the seminar had also served as a tool to demonstrate the importance of universal acceptance of the Protocol. Lastly, with the help of the CCW Sponsorship Programme, a documentary film had been produced on the Budapest workshop and Protocol V. He invited the Conference's participants to view the film, entitled "Before the Blast", during the lunch break. It would subsequently be made available to all States on DVD and could be used as a public service broadcast.

69. **The President** said he took it that the Conference wished to approve the recommendations contained in the Coordinator's report and to proceed with option III for the development of WISP.V.

70. *It was so decided.*

*Thematic discussion on the article 4 generic electronic template (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/5)*

71. **Mr. Markuš** (Slovakia), speaking as Coordinator on the article 4 generic electronic template, introduced the related report, which was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/5. At a meeting held in March 2009 to prepare for the meeting of experts, he had presented a discussion paper on elements to be considered in relation to the template and had asked the High Contracting Parties and observer States to provide input during the meeting of experts. At the meeting of experts, the participants had heard contributions by the United Nations Mine Action Service concerning the recording, retaining and transmission of information on explosive remnants of war and by the ICRC representative.

72. The meeting of experts had ascertained that, while some Parties had shared information on their national systems for recording and retaining information pursuant to article 4 of the Protocol, and others had reported that they had already introduced the article 4 generic electronic template as one of the tools to be used in their national practice, certain Parties had not offered any information on their implementation of the obligations under article 4.

73. It had not proved possible at the meeting of experts to find answers to the questions raised in his discussion paper. He had therefore suggested that the main points of the paper should be incorporated in form B of the draft guide to national reporting under Protocol V. He hoped that that would prompt the High Contracting Parties to give due consideration to the issue of recording and retaining information on explosive remnants of war and to take the necessary measures for the proper implementation of the Protocol.

74. During the meeting of experts, an observer delegation had transmitted on a voluntary basis information pertaining to explosive remnants of war. That had raised the question of how to identify an appropriate United Nations structure to serve as the focal point for collecting and transmitting information in such circumstances.

75. He recommended that the Conference should agree to continue the work being undertaken in the meeting of experts on the implementation of article 4, in particular by those High Contracting Parties that had not yet established relevant national systems, regulations and procedures, as well as on the other areas identified in his report. He further recommended that the Conference keep the article 4 generic electronic template and related issues under review at future Conferences.

76. **Mr. Grinevich** (Belarus) commended the work done under the Coordinator's guidance on the article 4 generic electronic template. While his delegation would be willing to join a consensus on an updated version, it endorsed the template as it stood.

77. **Mr. Markuš** (Slovakia), speaking as Coordinator on the article 4 generic electronic template, said that the current version of the template, which had been approved at the Second Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, was already in use, and there had been an agreement that it should not be amended. The template was one of the tools available to High Contracting Parties in fulfilling their obligations under article 4, particularly those Parties that had yet to develop national systems. He encouraged States to share their experience of using the template and to provide suggestions for the future.

78. **The President** said he took it that the Conference wished to approve the recommendations contained in the coordinator's report.

79. *It was so decided.*

*Thematic discussion on national reporting (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)*

80. **Mr. Markuš** (Slovakia), speaking as Coordinator on national reporting, introduced the related report, which was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4. In his letter of 3 March 2009, he had reminded the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V of their obligation to submit initial national reports, or updates of their reports, on matters pertaining to the implementation of the Protocol. The fulfilment of reporting requirements was an important indicator of the level of States' commitment to the principles and rules enshrined in Protocol V, as well as a means of promoting a culture of compliance and strengthening the framework for international cooperation and assistance.

81. There were currently 61 Parties to the Protocol. A total of 34 initial national reports had been submitted to the secretariat in 2008 and 2009; 16 initial reports were overdue. Some 30 annual updates of national reports and/or summary cover pages had been submitted in 2009.

82. The High Contracting Parties and observer States had been asked to consider elements to be included in a possible guide to national reporting under Protocol V. Consultations had been held on the subject with delegations, as well as with the International Committee of the Red Cross and Landmine Action, both during and after the 2009 meeting of experts. The resulting draft guide to national reporting under Protocol V was contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4/Add.1.

83. He recommended that the Conference should approve the draft guide, recommend its use by the High Contracting Parties and by observer States submitting their national reports on a voluntary basis, and decide to continue to evaluate the reporting mechanism and to request the 2010 meeting of experts to make recommendations on the matter for consideration by the Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V.

84. **Mr. MacBride** (Observer for Canada) said his delegation was not convinced that the meeting of experts needed to discuss the matter on a regular basis. His Government supported the principle of standardizing national reporting through the voluntary use of a uniform format, which would improve the substance and quality of reports. It would endeavour to provide transparent and detailed national reports that were consistent with the recommended format. However, ongoing military operations and security considerations would, to some extent, affect the information submitted. He therefore considered that the format should be used as a tool to facilitate the fulfilment of reporting obligations under Protocol V, rather than as a template for national reporting *stricto sensu*.

85. **Mr. Hoffmann** (Germany) commended the Coordinator's efforts to prepare a detailed draft guide to national reporting under Protocol V. Much remained to be done to achieve the overall objective of universalizing the Protocol, and there was still very little experience of national reporting. His delegation therefore welcomed the Coordinator's intention to continue to evaluate the reporting mechanism in the light of the experience gained by High Contracting Parties in submitting their reports and to request the 2010 meeting of experts to make recommendations for consideration by the Fourth Conference. In that connection, he noted with appreciation the working paper submitted by the Russian Federation on practical experience of implementing articles 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 of Protocol V (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/WP.1) and proposed that it should be placed on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of experts.

86. **Mr. Hodson** (United States of America) said that the draft guide provided an effective tool to assist High Contracting Parties in recording and reporting information relevant to Protocol V, while not requiring Parties to report on every item referred to in it. Endorsing the recommendations contained in document CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4, he

pledged that his delegation would continue to work with others on the evaluation of the reporting mechanism.

87. **Mr. Sirakov** (France) commended the detailed and comprehensive nature of the draft guide and reiterated his delegation's commitment to contribute to its finalization. The guide was an optional tool that should be practical, efficient and simple for High Contracting Parties to use.

88. **Mr. Varma** (India) said that the guide was an important tool to facilitate the preparation of national reports. Its use was voluntary, and the guidance it contained needed to be adapted and implemented at the national level, while ensuring that no new reporting obligations not stipulated under the Protocol were inadvertently imposed on High Contracting Parties. He supported the proposal to continue the work on reporting guidelines, and he was confident that, with the contributions of the various actors, a tool that met the interests of all would be ready for adoption at the Fourth Conference.

89. **Mr. Garraux** (Switzerland) expressed appreciation to the Coordinator for his report. He shared the view that continued evaluation of the guide in the meeting of experts would enable the good work done thus far to be finalized. A balance must be struck between facilitating reporting by means of a checklist of questions and leaving States sufficient room to exercise their discretion.

90. **Mr. Markuš** (Slovakia), speaking as Coordinator on national reporting, welcomed the overwhelming support for the work undertaken but noted the need for further consultations before he could finalize his report and the recommendations contained therein.

91. **The President** said he took it that the Conference wished to defer consideration of the topic until such consultations had been held.

92. *It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*