
**Fourth 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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**Report on Cooperation and Assistance and on Requests for
Assistance**

**Submitted by the Coordinator¹
on Cooperation and Assistance and Requests for Assistance**

1. The two closely related topics of cooperation and assistance and of requests for assistance, pursuant to articles 7 and 8 of the Protocol, are at the heart of Protocol V implementation. They are important contributing factors to the Protocol's universalization, particularly in the case of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)-affected States.
2. The Meetings of Experts offer a valuable opportunity to facilitate the matching of needs with resources, and to facilitate other aspects of cooperation and assistance, by increasing contact and mutual understanding between those dealing with the problems posed by ERW and those in a position to provide assistance.
3. The subjects of cooperation and assistance and of requests for assistance are intimately linked with other substantive areas of work under the Protocol, principally clearance and victim assistance. Indeed, both of these subjects are specifically referred to in article 8 on Cooperation and Assistance, respectively in paragraphs (1) and (2) of that article.
4. The substantive discussions on those topics at Meetings of Experts contribute to the general understanding among States of the needs and opportunities which exist for cooperation and assistance. At the 2010 Meeting of Experts, a number of countries commented in the session on victim assistance on their experiences of cooperation and assistance in that area, both as donors and as recipients of assistance. The session on clearance included a segment on the needs of ERW-affected States, which the present coordinator was kindly invited to co-chair.
5. The importance of national reporting was stressed, as a source of information on the activities of High Contracting Parties in the field of cooperation and assistance, as well on

¹ In accordance with the relevant decision of the Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, as contained in paragraph 54 (c) of its Final Document (CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/9), the discussions on cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance, pursuant to articles 7 and 8 of the Protocol, were coordinated by Mr. James C. O'Shea of Ireland.

other issues. In this context, attention was drawn to the fact that form E of the reporting formats was relevant not only to States affected by ERW, but also to High Contracting Parties which have provided assistance to such States. It was noted that the reports of some States, which were known from other sources to have provided assistance to States affected by ERW, provided no information on such assistance in form E, stating instead that their country was not affected by ERW. This reflected a misunderstanding of the purpose of the form, which was relevant as much to the provision of assistance as to the receipt of assistance. Hope was expressed that the “Guide to National Reporting under CCW Protocol V”, which was approved by the Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties, would help to avoid such situations occurring in the future.

6. The relevance and probable future utility of the Web-Based Information System for Protocol V (WISP.V) was noted. It was stated that, while the implementation of such a system would have obvious benefits for the operation of the Protocol as a whole, those benefits were likely to be especially noticeable in the area of cooperation and assistance.

7. It was noted that, from an analysis of the reports which have been submitted to date, quite a lot of activity was under way in the area of cooperation and assistance. Of the 36 States whose reports submitted in 2009 and 2010 were available on the CCW website at the time of the Meeting of Experts, 21, or almost two-thirds, had reported providing cooperation and assistance, and four had reported seeking or benefiting from cooperation and assistance. A further two countries had reported both benefiting from assistance provided by others, and providing cooperation and assistance themselves, such as for example by training clearance personnel from other countries or otherwise sharing their experience as ERW-affected States.

8. States which had either provided or received assistance with regard to ERW were encouraged to provide information on their experiences, both positive and negative, in order to allow lessons to be learned to inform future work on implementation of the Protocol, both at the national level and internationally. In addition, States in a position to provide assistance were invited to share information on the kinds of assistance which they might be able to provide, as well as on modalities of submission and consideration of applications for assistance, and other relevant matters.

9. The Meeting of Experts benefited from a detailed presentation by the delegation of Spain, which included reference to training courses organized by its International Demining Centre, established in 2002, from which representatives of some eighteen countries had benefited, to clearance work undertaken by Spanish forces in the context of multinational peace support operations, and to its supply of materials for use in ERW clearance work, e.g. the supply of demolition charges to the armed forces of Lebanon.

10. Information on assistance provided to ERW-affected States, and on possibilities of further assistance, was provided during the Meeting of Experts *inter alia* by the delegations of Australia, Canada, France, India, Switzerland, and the United States.

11. In addition to general information on its activities in the field of cooperation and assistance, the delegation of Canada provided information on a specific example which involved cooperation between the Canadian and US governments, and an NGO, to establish an ERW Coordination Centre in Georgia. This aimed to establish a stable coordination body to ensure that the impact of ERW on the Georgian population and infrastructure were reduced. It was also designed to ensure that the Government of Georgia would retain the capacity to continue the work.

12. The delegations of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina, both of which have experience of receiving assistance as ERW-affected countries, provided information on assistance provided by them to other countries, drawing on their own experiences.

13. The following points may be noted from presentations and remarks of States during the session on Cooperation and Assistance:

(a) Assistance can take many forms — including financial, material, training and advice;

(b) National capacity-building can form an important part of cooperation and assistance activities, and ensure that such activities provide long-term benefits;

(c) There is not necessarily a clear division of States into donors of assistance on one hand and recipients on the other. The same country can be both a donor and a recipient of assistance, and affected States can have valuable experience to share both with other affected States and with States which, while not themselves affected by ERW, may be able to use that experience to the benefit of ERW-affected States.

14. Each of the three States which have submitted requests for assistance pursuant to Article 7 of the Protocol provided information to the Meeting of Experts on the current status of their requests, as follows:

(a) Belarus reported that that it had not received any offer of assistance in response to its request, which had been submitted in May 2009. It hoped that some offers would still be received. It reported having had some contacts with UNMAS with a view to attracting international assistance and the possible undertaking, for this purpose, of an evaluation of the scope of the problem. It noted that it would provide information on the progress of its own clearance activities in the session on that topic;

(b) Serbia provided information on survey work under way, funded by the United States through the International Trust Fund (ITF), to assess the extent of cluster munition contamination. It reported that one cluster munition clearance project was conducted in 2009, the project Bapsko Polje 2, funded by Ireland through the ITF;

(c) Ukraine placed the challenge of clearance and destruction of ERW in the context of its overall activities which also included the destruction of stocks of explosive ordnance and anti-personnel mines. It referred to ongoing contacts with UNMAS regarding possible assistance within the framework of Protocol V and for the destruction of anti-personnel mines, including the planned undertaking of a study mission.

15. It was noted that the submission of a request for assistance under Article 7 was only one of the ways in which States affected by ERW could bring their needs to the attention of States or relevant international organizations and institutions which might be in a position to provide assistance — other possibilities included making presentations at Meetings of Experts or by approaching potential donors directly.

16. High Contracting Parties in a position to do so were encouraged to consider providing assistance in response to any requests received, since the provision of assistance in response to requests was an important means of operationalising the relevant provisions of the Protocol.

17. Bearing in mind the foregoing, it is recommended that the Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties decide as follows:

(a) To continue the consideration of cooperation and assistance, and of requests for assistance, as a priority issue in the context of the Meetings of Experts and the Conferences of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V;

(b) To encourage High Contracting Parties to include detailed information in reporting forms E and F, as relevant, on cooperation and assistance provided, as well as received;

(c) To encourage High Contracting Parties, relevant international organizations and institutions which might be in a position to do so, to consider providing assistance in response to requests submitted under Article 7 of the Protocol, or in response to needs identified in other ways, including during the Meetings of Experts;

(d) To encourage States which have submitted requests for assistance to provide regular updates on the status of those requests, using the amended Form B (Appraisal of needs) of the Formats for Requests for Assistance, as approved by the Third Conference of the High Contracting Parties.
