

Twenty-seventh Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II 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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Item 7 of the Provisional agenda

General exchanges of views

Working paper

Submitted by Azerbaijan *

1. Amended Protocol II on Mines, Booby-Traps, and Other Devices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons plays a vital role in reducing the risks posed by mines and booby-traps, which continue to endanger civilians and hinder post-conflict recovery.
2. Azerbaijan is facing serious mine threat, with 13 % of its territory contaminated with more than 1 million landmines and unknown number of explosive remnants of war. This massive contamination obstructs the safe return of displaced persons and delays reconstruction process.
3. Over the last 30 years, the cumulative toll of landmine victims in Azerbaijan is more than 3,400. Since November 2020, more than 400 Azerbaijani civilians and military personnel have been killed or seriously injured by landmine explosions.
4. Since the end of the occupation in 2020, remarkable progress has been achieved in demining operations; overall, 19.8 % of the territory has been cleared from the total estimated contaminated area. While foreign assistance accounted for only 4.8 per cent of demining operations in Azerbaijan, more than 95 per cent of these activities were funded by the Government of Azerbaijan.
5. Under the Great Return Program, signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, priority is given to demining operations and the construction of essential infrastructure, which are key components of the restoration, reconstruction, and sustainable development of the liberated territories.
6. Azerbaijan quarterly shares with the international community a comprehensive report dedicated to demining activities, titled "Mine Action in Azerbaijan: Priorities and Needs."
7. Given the severity of landmine contamination in Azerbaijan, we urge the international community to extend political and practical support for demining operations in Azerbaijan.
8. Azerbaijan remains committed to restoring safety and enabling the return of displaced persons to their homes.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

