

**17th Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties
on Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War
Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
Geneva, 13 November 2023**

Statement by Ireland

Mr. President,

1. Ireland aligns itself fully with the statement to be delivered by the European Union, and would like to add the following remarks in a national capacity.
2. Ireland adds our congratulations and our thanks to Ambassador Gordan Markotić of the Republic of Croatia, for his dedication to advancing the goals of the protocol. We assure you of our full support and commitment to the work of this conference.

Mr. President,

3. Ireland attaches great importance to Protocol V and its full implementation. It is vital that Protocol V obligations, including in relation to marking, clearance, removal and destruction, as well as victim assistance, are respected and implemented in full. We also continue to call for the integration of gender perspectives into this work, particularly in relation to the collection of data and the provision of victim assistance.
4. My delegation also welcomes the renewed and focused efforts by the President and his team towards promoting universalization by HCPs who have not yet acceded to Protocol V. It is vital that we continue reiterating the benefits of ratifying Protocol V and clarifying the varying obligations and interactions within Protocol V and the Amended Protocol II of the CCW, the APMBC, and the CCM. We note as well that the EWIPA Political Declaration, which many of you endorsed in Dublin this time last year, complements Protocol V in explicitly committing to marking, clearance, and removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war as soon as feasible once hostilities cease. We urge states in the room who have not done so, to join the Declaration without delay.
5. Ireland joins the EU and other States in urging all those that have not done so to join Protocol V as soon as possible: the universalisation of this crucial instrument is of utmost importance. We are particularly grateful for your personal efforts, Mr. President, in reaching out directly to States to encourage them to join and in creating a better understanding of any perceived

barriers towards universalisation. We encourage the incoming President to continue these efforts and stand ready to support them.

6. Explosive ordnance, including the use of cluster munitions, explosive weapons, mines and IEDs create long-lasting and complex harms. Alongside inflicting immediate humanitarian devastation, they create extensive contamination and enduring humanitarian risks through unexploded and abandoned explosive ordnance - impeding humanitarian access and recovery, undermining development, and posing ongoing risks to life and livelihoods long after the conflict is over.

President,

7. Ireland believes that victims, and their rights, must be at the core of our work. We thank Austria for its work as coordinator on Victim Assistance and request that this Conference continue to keep victims and those impacted by ERW at the forefront of our considerations.
8. Ireland further encourages States that are Party to the protocol to meet their reporting and transparency obligations. These obligations are crucial to its effective implementation.
9. Protocol V, if widely adhered to and fully implemented, has the potential to significantly reduce the civilian casualties that occur after the end of active hostilities, and to minimise the long-term socio-economic consequences that explosive remnants of war inflict on States affected by armed conflict.

President,

10. Regrettably, today's conflict landscape means our work on Protocol V is more relevant, and more vital than ever. Ireland is deeply concerned by ongoing explosive weapons attacks on civilians and civilian objects. This results in tragic and unacceptable loss of civilian life, the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, which is vital to communities' survival, and continued humanitarian threats from explosive remnants of war. Ireland strongly condemns these attacks and stresses that civilians and civilian objects are not legitimate objects of attack. International Humanitarian Law demands that civilians be protected in armed conflict. Ireland calls on all actors to uphold their IHL obligations.

Thank you Mr. President.