

Nineteenth Annual 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

12 November 2025

English only

Geneva, 10 November 2025**Agenda item 8****General exchanges of views**

Working Paper

Submitted by Australia *

1. Australia is steadfast in its commitment to the Protocol, to enhancing its implementation and to promoting its universalisation. Yet again, we must remark on the regrettable rise in explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination. It stems predominantly from conflicts and insecurity – and is a terrible legacy of war.
2. In our region, Pacific countries continue to live with the impacts from World War II-era ERW. In September, Pacific Islands Forum members endorsed the Blue Pacific Ocean of Peace Declaration. The Declaration commits Pacific Island Forum members, including Australia, to address hazards posed by unexploded ordnance and other remnants of war, as critical to promoting peace in our region.
3. With these objectives in mind, as a proud member of the Pacific Family, Australia maintains our enduring commitment to Operation Render Safe. Operation Render Safe is a joint operation with Pacific Island countries, the United States, Japan, and New Zealand to effect ERW clearance around the Pacific. Australia's commitment to Operation Render Safe contributes to collective regional security, as well as providing education and training to enhance the security capabilities of Pacific States.
4. Australia's commitment is also reflected in our ongoing support for the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. We partnered with the GICHD to deliver workshops in 2024 and 2025 on reducing explosive ordnance risk in the Pacific, with the next workshop bringing Pacific delegates to Geneva later this month. These workshops deepen capacity-building by bringing together Pacific States, experts, donors and other stakeholders.
5. Australia underscores the value of the CCW in championing and driving this work. The CCW meeting of experts for Protocol V in September provided a valuable opportunity to share lessons from Australia's UXO and ERW clearance work in the Pacific.
6. Australia is also concerned by ongoing ERW contamination in our region more broadly. Collectively, affected States in Southeast Asia have recorded more than 200,000 casualties due to mines and ERW, making it one of the most impacted regions in the world. In Myanmar, for example, mine clearance efforts continue to be extremely limited. In October, UNICEF reported 357 people in Myanmar were killed or maimed by ERW during the first six months of 2025 – tragically nearly one-third of these were children.
7. Looking to the future, emerging technologies will make mine clearance safer and faster. Australian companies are at the forefront of new detection capabilities for

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humanitarian demining. We encourage further developments in this area to assist front line clearance operators to do their life-saving work more safely and efficiently.

8. To conclude, we urge all High Contracting Parties to maintain their commitment to this important Protocol, and we ask those High Contracting Parties yet to sign and ratify to consider doing so without delay.
