

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

11 November 2025

English only

Geneva, 10 November 2025

Agenda item 8

General exchanges of views

Working Paper

Submitted by Canada *

1. Canada would have wished to deliver this document as a statement at the 19th Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V of the CCW, however given one delegation's objection to adopting the agenda, we regret that we were not able to have a general exchange of views and to have to submit this document as a working paper.
2. Canada believes that the importance of Protocol V cannot be overstated. Unexploded ordnance (UXO) kills and injures civilians long after the guns fall silent. They impede safe returns, block humanitarian access, and hinder the rebuilding of communities and infrastructure. Protocol V provides the framework for preventing, reducing, and addressing these devastating impacts through clearance, risk education, data sharing, and international cooperation.
3. To be fully effective, however, Protocol V must achieve universalization. Canada calls on all States not yet party to accede without delay. Universal adherence strengthens humanitarian protection and ensures a consistent global approach to reducing explosive hazards. The obligations enshrined in Protocol V reflect a shared responsibility to protect civilians and uphold international humanitarian law—responsibilities that apply equally to all states.
4. Canada remains deeply concerned by the rise in civilian casualties caused by unexploded ordnance in recent years. In too many regions, UXOs continue to kill and maim children playing outside, farmers working their land, and humanitarian workers delivering aid. These tragedies are preventable. They demand renewed commitment to clearance, risk education, and adherence to post-conflict obligations.
5. That is why the clearance of explosive remnants of war must remain a priority. Clearance saves lives, restores livelihoods, and creates the conditions for peacebuilding, development, and the safe return of displaced persons. Canada has long supported mine-action and UXO-clearance efforts globally, and we reaffirm our commitment to working with affected states, international organizations, and implementing partners to advance this critical work.
6. As we strengthen our collective response, gender considerations must remain central. Explosive remnants of war affect women, men, girls, and boys differently. Women are often underrepresented in clearance teams, yet we know that diverse participation increases operational effectiveness, expands community outreach, and improves risk-education efforts. At the same time, women and girls may face distinct barriers to accessing victim assistance and reporting risks. Canada therefore encourages all delegations to continue advancing

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



gender-responsive mine-action approaches, ensuring meaningful participation and equitable outcomes for all affected populations.

7. Canada also wishes to highlight the indispensable role of civil society. Humanitarian mine-action organizations, survivor networks, and technical experts are on the front lines of this work. Their expertise and dedication save lives every day, and their advocacy strengthens global norms and implementation. We express our deep appreciation for their contributions and reaffirm our support for their meaningful participation in this forum and across all aspects of mine-action and clearance efforts.

8. Canada remains firmly committed to Protocol V and to a world where no one lives in fear of explosive remnants of war. We urge States that have not yet done so to join this Protocol, and we call on all parties to intensify efforts on clearance, risk education, and assistance to victims. Together—with sustained partnerships, gender-responsive approaches, and strong engagement from civil society—we can ensure that communities scarred by conflict can safely rebuild and thrive.
