

Nineteenth 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

1 October 2025

Original: English

Geneva, 10 November 2025

Item 10 of the Provisional agenda

Consideration of matters pertaining to national implementation of the Protocol, including national reporting or updating on an annual basis

Report on the 2025 Meeting of Experts of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V

Submitted by the Coordinators ^{*, **, 1}

I. Introduction

1. The Meeting of Experts of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) took place in Geneva on 8 September 2025.
2. In accordance with the decisions taken at the Eighteenth Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V,² the Meeting of Experts focused its discussions on national reporting, Article 4 of the Protocol on “recording, retaining and transmission of information and generic preventative measures”, clearance of ERW and technical assistance and victim assistance.
3. Prior to the meeting, the President-designate of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, Ambassador Thomas Göbel, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, had informed High Contracting Parties to Protocol V of the programme of work of the 2025 Meeting of Experts, including guiding questions for the thematic discussions.
4. Women made up 55 per cent of the panellists who presented during this 2025 Meeting of Experts.

II. Conduct of the meeting (Geneva, 8 September 2025)

A. Universalization

5. The representative³ of the President-designate of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V welcomed the United Kingdom and Trinidad

* Agreement was reached to publish the present document after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter’s control.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

¹ Ms. Hannah Zulayka Abubakar of the Philippines on Clearance and Technical Assistance and Mr. Andreas Bilgeri of Austria on Victim Assistance. The decision to nominate a Coordinator on Clearance and Technical Assistance and one on Victim Assistance was taken by the Thirteenth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V (CCW/P.V/CONF/2019/5).

² CCW/P.V/CONF/2024/5, paragraph 18.

³ The President-designate was not able to be present to open and close the Meeting of Experts, so he designated a representative who did it on his behalf.



and Tobago which became High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on 13 November 2024 and on 29 January 2025, respectively. The representative of the President-designate noted that, out of 128 High Contracting Parties to the CCW, 99 are now bound by Protocol V, while 29 still remain outside of the Protocol. The representative of the President-designate stressed that wide accession to, and full implementation of Protocol V, the first multilateral agreement to address the challenges of unexploded and abandoned ordnance (UXO and AXO), could significantly reduce the number of civilians killed and injured during and after conflicts. It could also help mitigate the long-term socio-economic consequences of ERW. The representative of the President-designate further outlined the outreach efforts undertaken by the President-designate to promote universalization of the Protocol, noting that all High Contracting Parties not yet party to the Protocol had been contacted through formal letters encouraging their accession.

6. Several delegations underscored that Protocol V, by addressing the issue of ERW, is a cornerstone of the international humanitarian disarmament framework. Delegations also underlined the importance of promoting universal accession to the Protocol, especially in regions currently affected by armed conflicts and where ERW pose serious challenges to security, stability and development.

B. National reporting

7. National annual reporting is an obligation for High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, in accordance with Article 10, paragraph 2 (b) of the Protocol. Article 8 (5) of Protocol V on the provision of information to the relevant databases on mine action established within the United Nations system, provides the scope and content of the national annual reports. Furthermore, the “Guide to National Reporting under CCW Protocol V”,⁴ adopted by the Fourth Annual Conference,⁵ provides a checklist of questions to be used as a tool to facilitate national reporting. As outlined in this Guide, the High Contracting Parties are requested to provide annual reports containing information on Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 of Protocol V.

8. National annual reporting under CCW Protocol V is not only an essential mechanism for confidence-building and transparency among High Contracting Parties, but it is also an important tool in the monitoring and evaluation of the general status and overall implementation of the Protocol V.

9. Under the item on national reporting, the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the CCW informed the meeting that 59 national annual reports had been received, covering the period of 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 and briefed on submission trends of national annual reports. It was noted that, on average, each year, 60 percent of High Contracting Parties had submitted a national annual report since the adoption of the Protocol in 2005. The submission rates of annual reports among the 99 current High Contracting Parties to Protocol V could be grouped into four categories: States with a 100 percent submission rate (17 States), those with a rate of 50 percent or higher (41 States), States with a lower than 50 percent submission rate (17 States) and those that have not yet submitted a report (24 States). Within the group of States with a submission rate below 50 percent, six have only submitted a report once since joining the Protocol. The ISU reiterated its readiness to support High Contracting Parties in the preparing and submitting reports.

10. The ensuing discussion among delegations emphasised the crucial role played by reporting in enhancing transparency and building trust among High Contracting Parties. Delegations stressed the need to increase reporting rates and encouraged the organization of seminars and trainings to assist High Contracting Parties in meeting their reporting obligations. Additionally, States shared information on clearance of ERW conducted at the national level, compliance with technical measures included in the Protocol, as well as on other measures to protect the civilian population and civilian infrastructures from the threat of explosive ordnance.

⁴ CCW/P.V/CONF/2009/4/Add.1.

⁵ CCW/P.V/CONF/2010/11.

C. Article 4 on “Recording, retaining and transmission of information”

11. The Eighteenth Annual Conference of the HCP to Protocol V decided that the Meeting of Experts should focus on “article 4 of the Protocol, under the overall responsibility of the President-designate of the Nineteenth Conference”.⁶

12. The delegations heard from a panelist from the Ammunition Management Advisory Team of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (AMAT-GICHD). The expert discussed the role of ammunition management in implementing Protocol V, especially Articles 4 and 9. She outlined the safety and security risks, including accidental explosions and diversion, that can arise at any stage of the ammunition life cycle. Emphasizing the need for through-life ammunition management, she pointed to the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and the new Global Framework for Through-Life Conventional Ammunition Management (Global Framework). She stressed that poor storage, handling, and recordkeeping can result in unexploded or abandoned ammunition, thereby increasing the risk of ERW. The presentation also introduced new digital tools in development, including the Ammunition Inventory Management System (AIMS) and the Surveillance Information Management System (SIMS), designed to enhance national inventory tracking and surveillance. The panelist described safe, secure, and sustainable ammunition management as a practical means to achieve the objectives of Protocol V.

13. After the presentation, delegations were encouraged to respond to the following set of guiding questions:

- i. Are there any national best practices you can share about the recording, retaining and transmission of information on remaining explosive ordnance after the cessation of active hostilities to parties controlling the affected areas?
- ii. Are there measures which have proven to be more effective?

14. Several delegations shared national practices on the implementation of Article 4. Measures highlighted included the systematic registration of ammunition use, public reporting of demining activities, and emphasis on ammunition marking and tracing to prevent diversion. Delegations underscored the importance of international cooperation, accountability in ammunition transfers and the need for technical guidance on ammunition marking and tracing. The panelist referred delegations to the Global Framework and its implementation guide, noting ongoing expert work on developing guidelines on supply-chain security of ammunition.

D. Victim Assistance

15. The panel on victim assistance was composed of experts from the Swiss Foundation for Demining (FSD), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and Burkina Faso.

16. The panelist from the FSD described victim assistance as a holistic approach that encompasses emergency medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, and crucially extends into socio-economic inclusion. The speaker presented her organization’s long-term reintegration strategy, which supports the socio-economic inclusion of victims to shape long-term resilience. Accordingly, FSD supports initiatives within the framework of productive projects, including two case studies in Colombia and Tajikistan that promotes sustainable livelihoods and empower affected populations. These projects see survivors as active partners who shape projects, give feedback and eventually take full ownership with the coordination of local authorities, in a way that helps restore a sense of belonging and active participation in the communities.

17. The panelist from the DRC provided an overview of initiatives undertaken by the organization, focusing on Afghanistan and Yemen. These initiatives mainly concern the immediate aftermath of an Explosive Ordnance (EO) accident. However, the expert underlined the importance of a comprehensive approach for victim assistance, requiring long-term commitment, coordination and advocacy to facilitate effective inclusion. Coordination must include all stakeholders involved, including governments and local authorities. The

⁶ CCW/P.V/CONF/2025/5, para. 18 (a).

expert stressed that multi-sectoral victim assistance response must be grounded on evidence base, namely casualty data, which are often scarce in emergency context. In this regard, she highlighted the crucial role played by local partners, who can facilitate access to such data.

18. The representative from Burkina Faso, as Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), outlined the Committee's experience. He emphasized that its working method is based on the principle that every victim has the right to assistance tailored to individual circumstances. The expert introduced the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029 (SRAAP), which sets out 10 actions on victim assistance, ranging from providing concrete support to victims of ERW, to establishing the national structures and mechanisms necessary to ensure comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable assistance. He also explored possible synergies between humanitarian disarmament instruments such as the APMBC, the CCW and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Human Rights Council and the World Health Assembly.

19. Following the panel discussion, delegations were invited to consider the following guiding questions:

- i. What innovative technologies or methodologies have been adopted in your ERW risk reduction and victim support efforts, and how have they impacted outcomes?
- ii. How do national and local authorities in your countries coordinate to ensure rapid response and support following new ERW incidents?
- iii. How do you assess and address the socioeconomic impact of ERW contamination on affected communities, and what strategies are in place to promote sustainable recovery? To what extent are the communities involved in these efforts?
- iv. What measures are in place to monitor and evaluate the long-term effectiveness of ERW victim support initiatives? Looking at specific victim protection interventions that your country has carried out, have these measures proven effective over the long term in achieving the full social reintegration of victims?

20. Several delegations outlined national victim assistance measures, including risk reduction and educational initiatives. Some delegations also reported on the development of new policies addressing mines and ERW in their national legislative frameworks. Delegations engaged in interactive discussions with the panellists, focusing on the need to foster synergies between humanitarian disarmament instruments in the field of victim assistance, including the possibility of updating the 2008 Plan of Action on Victim Assistance under Protocol V.⁷ The importance of seeking international assistance was highlighted, particularly by affected States, while donor States explored ways to ensure that assistance programme are context-specific, sustainable and responsive to the needs of survivors.

21. Delegations shared relevant good practices implemented at the national level, including the development of legal instruments and action plans. The importance of disaggregated data collection and analysis was emphasized to ensure tailored responses. Coordination among national authorities, humanitarian actors and technical working groups was identified as essential to strengthening victim assistance. One delegation reported on the unprecedented level of contamination within its territory and the resulting increase in victims, underscoring the urgency of sustained support and cooperation.

E. Clearance of explosive remnants of war and Technical Assistance

22. At the request of the Coordinator, the CCW ISU took the floor to share some forms of assistance it can provide to High Contracting Parties in implementing the Convention and its Protocols. The CCW ISU referred to its mandate, and to key tasks listed in it.⁸ The CCW ISU highlighted that it can assist in connecting High Contracting Parties that are seeking specific technical assistance with international organizations that have the relevant expertise and capacity to provide such support. The CCW ISU also indicated that it can provide advice

⁷ CCW/P.V/CONF/2008/2, annex II.

⁸ CCW/MSP/2009/5.

and assistance on revising or updating legislation and/or policies and manuals to implement the Convention and its Protocols.

23. The panel on clearance of ERW and technical assistance was composed of representatives from the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP) and Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), as well as experts from the Anti-Persoonsmijnen Ontmijnende Product Ontwikkeling (APOPO), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

24. The Permanent Representative of Lao PDR to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva emphasized the critical role of national leadership, inclusive participation, and innovation in the clearance of ERW. He highlighted Lao PDR's coordinated approach through the National Regulatory Authority and the UXO Lao Action Sector Working Group, ensuring alignment with both national development strategies and international commitments, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The intervention outlined a comprehensive framework for technical assistance, comprised of capacity development through training in quality assurance, quality control, and information management, as well as direct support for survey and clearance activities, risk education, and victim assistance. Monitoring, reporting, and strategic planning are key components in ensuring coherence with multi-year national action plans, such as the Safe Path Forward III. He also addressed the integration of emerging technologies in clearance efforts, such as drones and artificial intelligence, noting ongoing pilot initiatives and the need for regulatory mechanisms guiding their deployment. He concluded by reaffirming Lao PDR's commitment to evidence-based planning and equitable access to clearance operations, ensuring that even the most remote communities are not left behind.

25. The panelist from AIFFP presented a case study on UXO clearance as part of the Nauru Airport resurfacing project. She highlighted the challenges of conducting clearance in a high-risk, operationally sensitive environment, emphasizing the importance of a locally led and culturally sensitive approach. The intervention detailed the discovery and safe removal of three live UXOs, including two 500-pound bombs, through a coordinated effort involving technical experts, emergency services, and community engagement. She emphasized the importance of proactive planning, capacity building, and scenario testing to minimize disruptions and ensure safety. The project resulted in the development of national UXO response protocols and strengthened local capabilities. Australia's commitment to humanitarian mine action was reaffirmed, including through regional initiatives such as Operation Render Safe and strategic cooperation with the GICHD, aimed at supporting a mine-impact-free Pacific.

26. The panelist from APOPO delivered a presentation on enhancing land release through the deployment of animal detection systems. He outlined APOPO's operational footprint across twelve countries, where trained dogs and rats are integrated in survey and clearance efforts. Technical survey dogs assist in delineating suspected hazardous areas with speed and precision, while mine detection rats offer a cost-efficient solution, particularly in low-threat environments. These methodologies are not intended to replace conventional tools but to complement them by improving operational efficiency, minimizing ecological disruption and strengthening data integrity. The panelist shared outcomes from joint assessments conducted with GICHD and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), which validated the reliability of animal detection in rural contexts. He also addressed operational challenges, including the need for specialized training, veterinary support, environmental limitations, and sustainable financing. The intervention highlighted increasing confidence in animal detection systems and their formal recognition under International Mine Action Standards as a validated approach to land release.

27. The panelist of the ICRC provided insights into the use of innovation and remote sensing technologies in areas affected by explosive ordnance. He underscored the importance of user-centered, context-sensitive solutions while noting persistent challenges related to affordability, sustainability, and operational viability across varied terrains. The presentation highlighted ICRC's drone-based remote sensing initiatives, developed in collaboration with academic and technical partners, which integrate thermal imaging and artificial intelligence to enhance detection precision. Field experiences from Jordan and Ukraine illustrated the

potential of these technologies to detect low-metal-content mines and reduce false positives. The intervention emphasized the strategic value of leveraging big data and historical conflict analysis to inform clearance prioritization and mitigate duplication of efforts. In conclusion, the panelist advocated for inclusive and collaborative innovation to advance safety, operational effectiveness, and cost-efficiency in humanitarian mine action.

28. The panelist from GICHD discussed evolving prioritization frameworks for ERW clearance, drawing on a study covering seventeen countries and over 10,000 sites. The intervention highlighted disparities in operational efficiency and stressed the need for context-specific, evidence-based approaches aligned with community needs. A value-driven model was proposed, supported by smart indicators and weighted criteria. Innovation, ranging from improved processes to artificial intelligence and predictive analytics, was identified as a key enabler. The panelist also addressed limitations of detection technologies and emphasized the importance of operator training and integrated systems. Environmental and climate resilience emerged as a central theme, with GICHD's methodology piloted in Iraq and Viet Nam, and successfully applied in Colombia and Kosovo. The session concluded with a call for inclusive, flexible, and standardized prioritization supported by long-term capacity development

29. Following the panel discussion, delegations were invited to consider the following guiding questions:

- i. Are there any innovative methods or new technologies - such as drones or AI - that improve and expedite the clearance of ERW? How do you assess the effectiveness of these technologies in comparison with traditional/conventional clearance methods?
- ii. What challenges do climate change and natural disasters pose to ERW clearance efforts? What kind of legislations or state practices have your countries developed or adopted to incorporate implementation of SDGs and ensure environmental protection in these processes?
- iii. What is the relationship between ERW clearance and victim assistance? How does your country handle situations where operators become victims themselves?
- iv. What are the processes, priorities and criteria for providing technical assistance in ERW clearance?
- v. What are best practices on the work between High Contracting Parties and civil society/other relevant stakeholders that ensure effective and inclusive clearance of ERW?

30. Delegations reaffirmed their commitment to Protocol V and the humanitarian objectives of the CCW, emphasizing the importance of innovation, inclusivity, and international cooperation in ERW clearance. The discussion highlighted the growing use of advanced technologies such as drones, infrared sensors, and artificial intelligence, while acknowledging their limitations in certain terrains and climates. Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of multi-sensor systems and the need for tailored approaches based on environmental conditions. The role of animal detection systems was reaffirmed, with experts noting their superior sensitivity compared to current mechanical alternatives.

31. Delegations also stressed the importance of knowledge-sharing and equitable access to innovation, particularly in regions where technological solutions remain limited. The need for sustainable funding and long-term support was emphasized, alongside calls for stronger public-private partnerships and strategic alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Ethical and procedural concerns were raised regarding the governance of mine action, including the importance of transparency, mandate adherence, and the use of standardized methodologies. The integration of robotic and remotely operated clearance systems was discussed to reduce direct risk to deminers. However, final verification remains a physical and human task carried out by Explosive Ordnance Disposal operators.