MEETING OF EXPERTS ON PROTOCOL V

GENERIC PREVENTIVE MEASURES

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE COORDINATOR

Opening

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen - good afternoon. Welcome to this afternoon's session on Generic Preventive Measures, pursuant to Article 9 and Part 3 of the Technical Annex of Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War.

As you may be aware, generic preventive measures focus on the issues such as the production, packaging, transportation and storage of explosive ordnance. The aim is to prevent munitions from becoming ERW, which is very much in line with the catch phrase – 'preventing is better than curing'.

At the Sixth Conference for Protocol V in November 2012, High Contracting Parties decided, inter alia:

- For the Coordinator on Generic Preventive Measures, with the support of the CCW Implementation Support Unit, to follow-up with those High Contracting Parties which have not reported on their implementation of generic preventive measures;

- To continue the practice of addressing one specific technical issue directly related to the implementation of Article 9 and Part 3 of the Technical Annex of Protocol V; and

- To invite all High Contracting Parties to share during the 2013 Meeting of Experts their national technical approaches and experiences in implementing Article 9 and Part 3 of the Technical Annex of Protocol V. High Contracting Parties may indicate how the Guide adopted by the Fourth Conference of the High Contracting Parties has contributed to the implementation of Part 3 of the Technical Annex.

Follow up with States which have not reported on the implementation of generic preventive measures

In response to the recommendation to follow-up with States which have not reported on the implementation of generic preventive measures, I have been speaking to individual delegations and will continue to do so throughout this week. I would like to remind all delegations that in Reporting Form G, it is important to set out how generic preventive measures are implemented in your country. For example, whether the measures are included in guidelines, regulations or legislation. If you have any questions please feel free to approach either myself or the CCW Implementation Support Unit.

The safe storage of ammunition

The topic for this year is the safe storage of ammunition, with a particular focus on civilian plants. I would like to begin by explaining how this topic was decided upon.

In the margins of the Sixth Conference, I held an open ended meeting aimed at identifying a specific technical issue to be addressed in 2013. All participants confirmed that, although the issue of the safe storage of ammunition has been addressed during the last two meetings of experts, the topic remains a high concern for governments and it deserves further consideration. In past years, discussions were focused on the storage of ammunition in military facilities but no less important issue is the storage of ammunition in civilian sites. These include production factories or demilitarization plants. It is often the case that different rules apply to the storage of ammunition compared to the storage in civilian sites. This is what I would like to address today – is there a distinction between the regulation of ammunition storage in military sites compared to civilian sites? If so, why does this disinction exist and what is the impact?

The safe storage of ammunition is a concern not only for individual governments, but for the entire international community. Around the world there have been explosions in ammunition stockpiles that have led to casualties and required assistance from the international community.

Partly in response to the ongoing problem of explosions within ammunition stockpiles, in 2008 the report of a group of governmental experts mandated by Resolution 61/72 was welcomed by the UN General Assembly which strongly encouraged States to implement its recommendations. That report contained a recommendation for technical guidelines for the stockpile management of ammunition to be developed within the United Nations. This recommendation triggered a process that eventually led to the compilation of what are now commonly known as the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, in short the IATGs. Given the importance of the IATGs to strengthening the implementation of many of the generic preventive measures under Protocol V, this session will also focus on the progress made towards the implementation of these guidelines.