DISCUSSION PAPER #1

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ELEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION ON CLEARANCE, REMOVAL OR DESTRUCTION OF ERW

I. Clearance, removal or destruction of ERW

The main purpose of this session is to serve as a forum for cooperation and assistance in clearance, removal or destruction of ERW. Against this background and as it was also the case during the 2009 Meeting of Experts, it provides an opportunity for updates by the ERW-affected States on the clearance activities undertaken and/or the challenges remaining. In particular, those ERW-affected States that have not yet done so, may wish to make a comprehensive background presentation, covering the origin and scope of the ERW contamination, their current ERW situation, actions taken at the national level, including legal and institutional set-up and status of on-going clearance programmes, main challenges and need of assistance, if any. Those ERW-affected States that did present their national cases last year may wish to present an update on progress made throughout the year and the challenges which still exist. The experience of ERW-affected State in seeking and receiving assistance under the provisions of the Protocol would also be of interest to the participants.

The session is also an opportunity for updates by States and others in a position to assist those which have to deal with ERW-contamination.

II. Article 3 – Clearance
1. Evaluation & Achieving Results in clearance projects

2. Last year the Meeting of Experts addressed the theme of priority setting for clearance activities, based on a GICHD presentation. This year the focus will be on Evaluation and Achieving Results in Clearance Projects. A clear definition of its final results is a condition sine qua non for the success of a project. Against this background, the definition of tangible and measurable projects results for each development phase is of particular importance. The learning aspect should also be highlighted: evaluations are an integral and essential part of

¹ Note: This is not an official UN document and the symbol is used for reference purposes only!
the project life cycle and lessons learned can improve the project’s subsequent phase, its management decisions, clearance efficiency, selection of beneficiaries (priority setting) etc.

States parties and observers are invited to an informal and open exchange of views on national experience in going through the ERW clearance project cycle, starting with priority setting and finishing with the evaluation of the results on clearance done.

3. Clearance of exploded ammunition stockpiles

In 2009, a presentation on Technical Preventive Measures focused on the importance of proper ammunition storage. Several incidents involving exploded depots, often killing and injuring people and contaminating vast areas of land with ammunition, were also referred to. Building on that, in 2010 the Meeting of Experts will benefit from a presentation by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA). It will focus on the clearance of those exploded ammunition stockpiles, which are particularly challenging, because they contain large amounts of ammunition in an unpredictable condition. It will emphasize the importance of ensuring control over the spilled-out ammunition as quickly as possible, in order to avoid accidents, as well as theft and the use of the explosives by terrorists.

States parties and observers are invited to share their national experience on challenges faced and actions taken in clearing exploded ammunition stockpiles.

III. Article 4 - Recording of information on the use of explosive ordinance; submission of information to the party in control of the territory

Under the provisions of Article 4 of the Protocol the High Contracting Parties and parties to armed conflict shall record and retain information on the use of explosive ordinances or abandoned explosive ordinance during an armed conflict. It is widely recognized that strict compliance with the above provisions is of primary importance for the successful implementation of the ERW clearance obligations under Article 3 of the Protocol as it makes the marking, clearance, removal or destruction of ERW much more efficient. In this regard, creating a culture of recording and retaining of such data at national level is considered of crucial importance.

All States parties and observers, including relevant international organizations, are invited to an informal and open exchange of views on national experience and practices in recording and retaining of information on the used and abandoned explosive ordinance, as well as on making such information available to the party or parties in control of the affected area.

The following questions may be particularly relevant for this discussion:

- How is the formal requirement of recording of used explosive ordinance implemented during an armed conflict?
- What formats are being used to record the data on explosive ordinance?
- Who takes the decision on the priorities of recording the information?
- How is this information stored?
• How is the recorded information used after the conflict? How long is it kept?
• What type of decision is needed in order to transfer the data collected to the party in control of the territory or to a third party/international organization?
• How has the entry into force of CCW Protocol V affected your national practice on recording and passing on the recorded information?

IV. Environmental impact of ERW

Specific attention shall be given to the need of undertaking ERW clearance activities in an environment-friendly manner in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) on the protection of the environment. Accordingly, this session will further focus on the impact of ERW clearance on the environment.

States parties and observers are invited to share their national experience on the environmental impact of ERW and ERW clearance practices implemented in order to make clearance less harmful to the environment.