10 March 2014

The Permanent Representatives of the
High Contracting Parties to CCW Protocol V
Geneva

Excellency,

In advance of the 2014 Protocol V Meeting of Experts, which will take place from 3 to 4 April, I would like to outline the preparations for the session on generic preventive measures (GPMs). Generic preventive measures (GPMs) cover areas such as the production, storage, transportation and use of munitions.

The work on GPMs will be conducted in two separate sessions. The first session will take place in plenary and address the recommendation agreed at the Seventh Conference in November 2013, to “continue exchange of views on the management of munitions sites during the 2014 meetings, with the view to minimize the failure rate of ammunition.” Specifically, I encourage delegations to be prepared to discuss the following questions on the management of munitions sites:

- Who in your country’s armed forces is responsible for the management of munitions sites? Does this responsibility change during an armed conflict?
- What are the standard operating procedures under which your munitions are managed? Are these procedures in accordance with the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines?
- What measures are taken to maintain munitions storage areas? Are the munitions sites regularly checked? And if so, how often are the sites checked?
- What records are kept of those who enter such sites?
- What records are maintained on the numbers and types of munitions stored?
- How often are the munitions inspected? What procedures are in place to identify and remove degraded munitions?
- Has your country received outside expert assistance or advice on munitions safety in storage and transportation?

The second session will be conducted as a round table discussion of military experts. During the round table discussion, I would welcome feedback on the above questions and on any other issues concerning the management of munitions sites. Specific issues I hope to discuss are how best to assist countries experiencing difficulties in the area of GPMs and how to promote this area of work. As always, those delegations without military experts are also welcome to participate.

In support of this work on GPMs and as directed by the Seventh Conference, the CCW Implementation Support Unit will be following up with States that have not reported on their implementation of GPMs.

I look forward to working with all delegations to enhance our collective understanding and implementation of GPMs. If you have any questions or require further information please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Ms. Hine-Wai Loose, CCW Implementation Support Unit.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Jim Burke
Colonel