Opening

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the Protocol V Meeting of Experts for 2013. I am honoured to serve as the President-designate for this year’s Seventh Conference and to working with all delegations to advance the objectives of Protocol V.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the delegation of Cuba, which is the latest State to join Protocol V, the participants in the CCW Sponsorship Programme and those non-States Parties joining the meeting.

Protocol V stands aside as the most comprehensive of the CCW’s instruments. Experiences and lessons learnt have been shared on recording the use of explosive ordnance and clearance; a Checklist on Generic Preventive Measures has been established; cooperation and assistance is a central plank of the Protocol’s work; the Protocol V Plan of Action on Victim Assistance is being promoted; and the national reporting rates are steadily increasing each year. For these different mechanisms to be effective, we must assess honestly the progress made towards implementation and ensure that challenges and barriers are overcome. The Meeting of Experts is the key mechanism for both assessing and advancing implementation and I encourage all
delegations to participate in the discussions and small group meetings over the next two and a half days.

This morning I am going to outline the following organisational issues for our Meeting of Experts:

- Documentation;
- Work of the Meeting of Experts;
- Programme of Work;
- Issues concerning the Rules of Procedure from the Sixth Conference;
- Coordinators and Officeholders for 2014; and
- Universalization.

**Documentation**

On documentation, as delegates may be aware there is no formal documentation for this meeting. Instead, the Coordinators prepared letters on their plans and goals for each of their sessions. Those letters are available on the CCW website or can be obtained from the Secretariat. Copies of the Programme of Work are available at the back of the room. The focal point for Protocol V within the Secretariat is Ms. Hine-Wai Loose.

**Work of the Meeting of Experts**

The work of this meeting is based on the recommendations which were agreed to at last year’s Sixth Conference. The discussions and input on those recommendations
will form the basis for each Coordinator’s report, which will then be presented for approval to this November’s Seventh Conference. If you intend to make an intervention during the coming days please inform Hine-Wai Loose.

**Rules of Procedure**

As delegations may recall at last year’s Sixth Conference High Contracting Parties took the decision to address the contradiction Paragraph 3 of Article 10 of Protocol V and Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure. I propose that we now address this issue. As you will be aware exactly the same issue and mandate was agreed to under Amended Protocol. Yesterday the APII Group of Experts did not have time to discuss this issue and therefore, our decision today will be considered under that Protocol.

Paragraph 3 of Article 10 of Protocol V requires the contributions of both High Contracting Parties and observers to be adjusted accordingly. Whereas, Rule 12 of the applicable Rules of Procedure only requires the contributions for High Contracting Parties to be adjusted accordingly, but not the contributions of observers.

This is a purely technical problem that needs to be resolved at the Seventh Conference in November. My suggestion is that we delete Rule 12 from the Rules of Procedure, re-number the remaining Rules and reissue them. Therefore on the determination of costs sharing for future conferences, only Paragraph 3 of Article 10 will apply. This is in line the decision taken during last year’s Sixth Conference to suspend Rule 12.
May I take it that this approach is acceptable to delegations? Thank you, I will set this out in a letter to delegations prior to the Seventh Conference.

**Coordinators and Officeholders for 2013**

Another issue that I would like to mention now is the coordinators and officeholders for next year. I realise that it may appear premature to discuss this matter, but if you are interested in or willing to serve as a coordinator or officeholder for next year please approach either myself, the Coordinators or Hine-Wai Loose.

**Universalization**

We now come to the important matter of universalization of Protocol V. Universalization is essential to transforming the Protocol V’s rules into norms and establishing a truly comprehensive framework for both remedying and preventing humanitarian harm from explosive remnants of war.

At last year’s Sixth Conference, it was recommended that:

- The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President-designate of the Seventh Conference, on behalf of the High Contracting Parties, exercise their authority to achieve the goal of universality of Protocol V.
- The President-designate to consider reporting to the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly on his endeavours.
- High Contracting Parties to Protocol V and the CCW Implementation Support Unit to promote wider adherence to Protocol V.
As President-designate and along with Ambassador Simon-Michel and Ambassador Gallegos Chiriboga, we have written to all States not yet party urging them to join the CCW. We will continue to explore opportunities to promote universalization of the CCW and its Protocols.