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 (CCW)

Ninth Meeting of States Parties to Protocol V

10 November 2015, Geneva

Statement by MAG on Generic Preventative Measures

(Check Against Delivery)

Many thanks Mr Coordinator, and thanks also for the report and work.

MAG is delighted that issues of ammunition management have been the focus of so many States this year, in this forum and elsewhere. While, as you note, the Generic Preventative Measures in this Protocol relate to the prevention of Explosive Remnants of War in conflict, they must be seen as part of wider life cycle management of ammunition. This is rapidly becoming a priority for many States.

MAG has spoken on this issue for several years and so I will keep my comments brief. Work to respond to the humanitarian impact of Unplanned Explosions at Munitions Sites, and also the impact on people from diverted munitions, has grown in scale. It must continue to do so as needs currently outstrip global capacity to respond, particularly in areas affected by conflict and fragility. MAG and several other NGOs have provided assistance to states – under a framework of national ownership – we plan to continue to do so.

While I have the floor, I would like to underline MAG’s view that management of stockpiles is related to the issue of ERW and involves many organisations – including my own – that are also undertaking mine action work. But we feel firmly that this work falls beyond the scope of mine action. While in need of greater and broader support, work on stockpile management should not come at the expense of mine action’s work on – and funding for – mines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war.

Finally, Mr Coordinator, I would like to commend the UN SaferGuard initiative and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) as a global guiding framework, including the consultative way in which colleagues at UNODA have engaged practitioners. From an operational perspective, I would like to note again the utility of the IATG, with their incremental nature helpfully guiding work in even the most complex contexts. We fully support your comments that work to mitigate the risk of diversion and devastating unplanned explosions do not have to be resource intensive. We also note the importance of regional cooperation in addressing the human impact of stockpiles.

Finally, we join others in thanking Switzerland for convening next week’s consultative meeting on life cycle management and we look forward to it.
Many thanks Mr Coordinator, and we look forward to further work on this topic here and in other relevant fora.

ENDS