



**Netherlands Statement**  
**concerning Protocol V (Explosive Remnants of War),**  
**Meeting of the High Contracting Parties,**  
**Geneva, 14 November 2022**

Mister President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your election and you can count on the full support of my delegation. In addition to the statement by the EU, the Netherlands would like to add the following in its national capacity.

The Netherlands attaches great value to the implementation of this Protocol, and its universalization. In this regard, we welcome the Philippines as the 97<sup>th</sup> High Contracting Party to Protocol V. We strongly encourage all states that have not yet done so to become a party to the CCW and this Protocol.

We appreciate the continued efforts by the Presidency and ISU, to continue universalization efforts and to facilitate expert assistance under this Protocol. We encourage additional efforts to further the operationalization of expert assistance, including through military-to-military dialogues during the expert meetings.

Furthermore, we urge all HCP to meet their reporting obligations under the Protocol. As some are facing difficulties to fulfill their reporting obligations, expert assistance could make the difference and we welcome the ISU's workshops on reporting and call on all HCP, especially those who have not fulfilled their reporting obligations, to attend these workshops.

The Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas provides another avenue to improve the protection of civilians and the Netherlands will sign on 18 November. We urge others to do the same.

Mr President,

The long-lasting threat of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) remains of great concern. The strict implementation of this Protocol by all High Contracting Parties is key to ensure that it remains an effective instrument to comprehensively address ERW's.

In this context, we are deeply concerned by the recently published reports from the UN's Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, as well as the interim report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which provide detailed accounts IHL violations in Ukraine following Russia's illegal invasion. As the UN reports conclude that the Russian armed forces are responsible for the vast majority of the violations identified, we take this opportunity to call again on the Russian Federation to respect its IHL obligations, including Protocol V. Furthermore, we demand for the immediate and unconditional withdraw all Russian troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine.

Considering the humanitarian goals of Protocol V, we would like to stress the responsibility of all belligerents with respect to their duty of clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war and assist each other in fulfilling this duty after the cessation of active hostilities. In this context, we stress the importance of the obligations under article 4 of this protocol. The Netherlands remains committed to efficient international cooperation and assistance, and we are committed to support Ukraine with its clearance efforts.

Thank you.