Explosive Remnants of War and Their Consequences

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Explosive Remnants of War and Their Consequences

This article examines the post-conflict situation of Tajikistan, which has not only anti-personnel mines but various kinds of explosive remnants of war. Recently Tajikistan signed Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which includes a commitment to clear the nation’s ERW. The author highlights some of the different sources of ERW in Tajikistan as well as the progress being made by authorities to clear and destroy ERW.

Impact of ERW in Tajikistan

In addition to the landmine problem, items of UXO also pose a great threat to the population. Since the implementation of the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme, the manual mine-cleaning teams and survey teams have found and destroyed more than 700 pieces of UXO. A majority of the UXO were found in the central region of the country where fighting took place during the civil war. Until the ERW are removed from these areas, they will continue to pose a great risk to the population. In Tajikistan, despite the ERW problem, civilians go about their daily business and continue to find themselves in dangerous areas, at times receiving injuries. For example, in February 2006, two teenagers—brother N. Yorov, 15, and sister M. Yorova, 16, from Bobonim village in Hissar district—were injured by UXO explosion while cutting wood. N. Yorov’s leg was seriously injured and his sister received injuries to her stomach. Due to the lack of financial means, the family was unable to provide necessary medical care for the teenagers, which has greatly hampered their recovery. An investigation into the cause of this explosion revealed
In March 1993, two brothers—Bahiddin and Nuriddin Eshonov, ages 18 and 17—found a piece of UXO and began to open it. This action resulted in an explosion and the brothers were both killed.

On 23 July 1993, 11-year-old Khusrov Khatiyev found an item of UXO and tried to burn it. The resulting explosion blinded the boy.

On 23 April 2005 two brothers—Salim and Mahmadali Saimuddinov, ages 8 and 9—and 5-year-old Fathiddin Ilhomiddinov from the village of Khost found a piece of ERW while they were gathering wood. They began to cut it with an axe which resulted in an explosion and all three of the boys were seriously injured.

In accordance with the agreement between the government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) signed in Europe on 16 May 2005 and within the framework of the Programme of Small Arms and Light Weapons, an Explosive Demolition Centre was established within the Ministry of Defence. Its major objective is to facilitate the demolition of ERW. More than 70 metric tons (77 tons) of ERW have been demolished as of 19 October 2006, and the work is ongoing.

Conclusion
Taking the serious consequences of ERW into consideration, it is necessary to point out that the adoption of Protocol V by the international community and its entry into force has great importance for the safety of civilians. Of course, it significantly depends on the process of accession of the governments and the fulfillment of its provisions by State Parties. TMAC hopes the implementation of Protocol V allows all parties to take practical measures to demolish ERW efficiently and productively to provide safety for all.

Industrial Ammunition Stockpile Recovery: Saving Energy and Resources and Protecting the Environment

This article presents the opportunities for the disposal of ammunition in an economically and environmentally feasible way, focusing on post-conflict disposal of larger stocks of ammunition with a special view to the ongoing Ammunition Stockpile Destruction Programme in Afghanistan managed by the Afghanistan New Beginning Programme. The contents of the article are based on the experiences gathered under the umbrella of the research and development programmes Western European Armament Group European Cooperation for the Long-Term in Defence and European Union L’Instrument Financier pour L’Environnement (EU LIFE), together with a study carried out for NATO’s Maintenance and Supply Agency, followed by field studies on ammunition stockpile destruction in mine-action programmes.

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