



Statement by
the Republic of Slovenia
at the
2nd International Conference of the EWIPA Declaration – Session 4

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Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to Session 4, which addresses how to move from policy commitments to real operational action in situations involving explosive weapons in populated areas.

From the outset, Slovenia has placed training, resources and field-application at the heart of its approach to protecting civilians. Let me share three concrete dimensions of our work that link policy-level commitments to the planning and execution of operations.

1. Targeting processes that integrate civilian-harm prevention

At the political-strategic level, the Government and the National Security Council initiate directives on targeting. These directives are then passed via the Chief of the General Staff to operational commands. At the operational level, a Joint Targeting Group connects strategic guidance with operational objectives. At the tactical level, brigades form their own targeting groups.

Within all these processes, we ensure that any infrastructure or part thereof considered for engagement is rigorously assessed to determine whether it is a civilian object or enjoys special protection under international humanitarian law (IHL). Lethal engagements not pre-authorised require express approval from the Joint Targeting Group. Intelligence services, including the J2 Sector for Intelligence and the Military Intelligence and Counter-intelligence Sector, provide key inputs on target nomination, target development, target identification, assessment of effects, and ongoing monitoring, including alliance databases.

These established chains of command and approval, together with intelligence input, help us address the issues flagged under operative commitments 3.3 and 3.4: namely understanding and accounting for the direct and indirect effects of explosive weapons on civilians and civilian objects.

2. Training and resource investment in new methods and means

Slovenia's armed forces conduct regular peacetime training on targeting procedures, with a strong emphasis on IHL. In cooperation with the Slovenia based Peace

Operations Training Centre and the Faculty of Law of University of Ljubljana, we emphasise not only the theoretical fundamentals of IHL, but also applied scenarios and case studies that reflect the operational realities of today's conflicts. In 2023, we introduced digital simulation tools based on current-conflict case studies, allowing trainees to visualise and assess both the immediate and the cascade effects of explosive weapons in populated settings.

This training directly supports operative commitment 3.5 (ensuring that personnel understand foreseeable effects of explosive weapons) and 4.2 (linking training to resources and field application).

3. Planning frameworks that incorporate foreseeable effects and civilian-infrastructure protection

In our planning processes, we now include specific assessments of how damage or disruption to essential civilian infrastructure, such as water systems, energy networks or hospitals, will impact civilians and humanitarian needs.

By integrating such analyses into operational orders, annexes, and target-selection criteria, we ensure that the use of explosive weapons aligns as closely as possible with commitments to refrain or restrict use in populated areas, taking into account their explosive power, accuracy and the number of munitions – key factors identified under operative commitment 3.4.

In conclusion, Slovenia believes that training, resource-investment and rigorous operational frameworks are indispensable to translating policy into real world protection for civilians. We welcome exchange of best practices with other states, support mutual assistance initiatives and stand ready to share tools and methodologies that we have developed. The challenge before us is formidable, but through coordinated action we can reduce harm, protect civilian lives and uphold the obligations of international humanitarian law.