



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Informal Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

(7-8 June 2018)

Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance

Madam Chair,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising the United Nations entities¹ involved in mine action.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Dalil for her election as President of the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The United Nations wishes to welcome Sri Lanka and the State of Palestine as States Parties to the Convention. We encourage States who have not joined, to do so without delay.

After nearly two decades of steadily diminishing casualty rates, the total number of people killed or injured by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in recent conflicts has leapt to its highest since 1999.² Landmines and ERW continue to take a devastating toll on children: 42% of all civilian casualties, the highest annual total of child casualties ever recorded.

The United Nations urges that Victim assistance be a continued priority to address the specific needs and requirements of survivors to help rebuild their lives and livelihoods, and exercise their rights as full and equal members of society. In this respect, it is of utmost importance to give attention to gender and age specific psycho-socio support.

¹ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer)

² Landmine Monitor Report 2017: In 2015, 6,967 casualties recorded, against 8,605 in 2016. A 19% increase.



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Recent analysis from the United Nations Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism highlighted the importance for a country to integrate victim assistance policy within the national health system to provide more adequate services through broader and sustainable support.³

Excellences,

The practical implementation of Article 5 must increasingly assess the concrete impact of our work on affected communities.

In March 2018, with UNMAS support and Sudan's high-level commitment towards APMBC, the destruction of all known anti-personnel landmine contamination in Eastern States of Sudan was completed. With this achievement, 80 % of known landmine contaminated areas in Sudan are cleared; but what is the impact for the population?

For example, in Kassala State, the clearance enabled the restoration of a main road between Karakoon and Hamashkorieb. The population can now freely move between these localities, where previously people made a six-hour detour, offering income generation and local development opportunities. Indeed, the work of mine action makes tangible contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations commends the work conducted by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance in developing the individualized approach. The United Nations stands ready to support this initiative at both global and country level in facilitating exchange between

³ Report of the 7th Round of Data Collection; M&E Mechanism of the UN Strategy for Mine Action 2013 – 2018; United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action; May 2018



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affected States and States able to provide assistance. Sudan is an example of the coordination role of UNMAS at the country level ensuring that relevant assistance is received.

Furthermore, the United Nations considers critical that the implementation of Article 6 on International Cooperation and Assistance aims at developing national capacity that will enhance long-term sustainability and full national ownership of the landmine problems.

In Sri Lanka, UNICEF maintained partnerships and coordination mechanisms with the national mine action authority, the Ministry of Health and relevant departments, to address all child injuries including mine/ERW injuries. In 2017, the injury surveillance system was expanded to 90 hospitals. Information on child injuries will be used to inform ongoing policy development on mine/ERW injury prevention, and will be key to design programmes.

In Tajikistan, UNDP helped develop the national capacity of the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre, including the formulation of strategic national policies, such the National Mine Action Law, Mine Action Strategy, and National Mine Action Standards; and provided survivor and victim assistance technical support to the Ministry of Health. A national capacity transition plan has been produced to achieve full national ownership.

In Somalia, UNMAS has built capacity within national entities including the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA). In the past year, SEMA took full ownership of the Information Management System and finalized the National Mine Action Strategy. Additionally, UNMAS continued to enhance the operational capability of the Somali Police by providing technical support and advice to EOD personnel.



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Excellences,

The current Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action concludes this year. We are organizing consultations with Member States, and civil society as your inputs and perspectives will be invaluable in the development of our next strategy. Greater impact for affected communities, socioeconomic development, and sustaining peace will be at the heart of our commitments to fulfil the goals of the Maputo Action Plan.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, 77% of known suspected hazardous areas have been cleared. Compliance with Article 5 deadline by 2021 can be realised if financial efforts are sustained to clear the remaining western and northern provinces. To name only a few others, Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, South Sudan have also considerable funding needs to keep up the pace to meet its clearance deadline.⁴

The General Assembly resolution on Assistance in Mine Action⁵, “urged all, in particular those that have the capacity to do so, to provide reliable, predictable, timely, and where possible, multi-annual contributions to mine action capacities”.

We thank donors for their continued trust in United Nations; we also thank affected states and civil society for the strong partnership.

Thank you.

⁴ United Nations Portfolio on Mine Action; April 2018

⁵ GA Resolution 72/75