

Presentation on Dissemination of good practices and revision of guidelines and principles

At the occasion of the first Meeting of the Standing Committees on Mine Clearance and Related Technologies,
5-6 December 2000

By Markus Haake, on behalf of the Mine Action working Group of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)

Distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

Many of you may know the points I will raise. This is more a reminder on issues that are still important from all perspectives – NGOs including those of the Mine Action Working Group of the ICBL, donors and beneficiary countries. That is also a reminder that there is still unfinished business, that there are still basic requirements, which need to be fulfilled.

My points refer to two documents: the STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES – you will find this in the NGO-Compendium -, and the BAD HONNEF FRAMEWORK – you will find this outside on the desk hopefully in a language which is useful to you.

First of all, it is worthwhile to recall that Mine Action is not an exercise for its own, but should be carried out for the benefit of the communities affected by landmines. Thus, the need for objective analysis of the requirements of affected communities, and the structuring and conduct of operations to meet these requirements is still key for Mine Action Programmes.

Secondly, from the experiences of the NGOs it is key to involve the affected community in the planning and implementing of Mine Action operations from the very beginning on. ‘Participation’ is the keyword for that.

Thirdly, in this connection it is still appropriate to underline that all programmes should be take into account the cultural sensitivities of the country where Mine Action is carried out. This also includes the requirements of national capacity building for Mine Action Programmes.

Fourthly, a responsible approach to the welfare of the personnel should apply to all actors involved in Mine Action.

Fifthly, the Mine Action Working Group stresses the need of continued development of existing methodologies for Mine Action, which is linked also to a realistic and objective approach to new mine clearance technologies and methodologies.

Sixthly and lastly, it is still worthwhile to underline the need to avoid “quick-fix solutions” in the area of Mine Action. Rather long-term commitments are needed in order to achieve sustainable solutions, which include the training of local people to deal with the mine problem and its wider socio-economic impact.

The Mine Action Working Group of the ICBL asks the chairs to take these points into consideration when preparing the recommendations for the SC on the General Status.

Thank you for the attention.