



Ständige Vertretung Deutschlands  
bei der Abrüstungskonferenz  
Permanent Mission of Germany to  
the Conference on Disarmament  
Mission Permanente d'Allemagne  
auprès de la Conférence du Désarmement

STATEMENT BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR

BERNHARD BRASACK

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY

TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

ON

“MINE CLEARANCE”

GENEVA, 19 SEPTEMBER 2006

Check against delivery

## Germany

### Statement on Mine Clearance

Address,

Germany fully subscribes to the statement submitted in writing by the European Union and would like to offer the following additional remarks. Germany, with the aim of contributing to the effective promotion and full implementation of the Ottawa Convention, has assisted a number of States Parties in their efforts of mine clearance and will remain committed to do so in the future. *Details are included in the brochure on "The European Union mine actions in the world" circulated this morning.*

Since mine action started in Afghanistan, in 1989, much has been achieved, notably by the mine ban movement which continues to make remarkable progress toward eradicating anti-personnel mines as we speak. A world free from the impact of anti-personnel mines now seems achievable in years rather than in decades.

However, significant challenges remain: The first mine-clearance deadlines are looming. In order to meet these deadlines significant efforts will have to be undertaken primarily by mine affected States Parties. They deserve assistance wherever needed.

It is believed that the financial means available for Mine Action are more likely to decline than to increase in the future. Hence, demining operations have to become much more efficient and effective in order to meet the deadline set in Article 5 of the Convention. ~~We have already passed the learning phase in mine clearance.~~ Both national and international organizations involved in clearance operations have gained throughout the last 15 years considerable expertise in order to be able to meet the task successfully. Moreover, the available equipment and the internationally developed clearance methods and standards have proven to be sufficiently mature to meet the challenges we face. New demining equipment, enabling us to gain a significant higher clearance pace, is not likely to be developed in the near future.

The data collected through the landmine impact surveys offers a good basis for effective national priority setting. It seems to be sufficient to meet the demands of Mine Action today and in the near future.

As far as we could see, all prerequisite measures for progress in mine clearance have been carried out.

(X) The encouraging examples of Kosovo, Yemen or Croatia may underline that, given a concerted cooperation and determined action, success is achievable.

*The first mine-clearance deadlines are looming.*

We call ~~and call~~ upon those States Parties who still have to meet considerable challenges in this area to amplify their efforts in order

- to identify all known or suspected mined areas,
- to develop and implement national <sup>action</sup> plans and
- to intensify their national efforts to fulfil their Article 5 obligations

The following elements play a key role in German funding activities:

- <sup>We are</sup> Germany is increasingly funding clearance of areas which have been declared “high impact areas” by the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS). This approach is believed to lead to a continuous reduction of victims and may effectively support development efforts.
- As the responsibility for mine action lies primarily with the affected countries, we put special emphasis on the funding of local capacity building projects.
- National ownership by mine affected countries is a key element for future <sup>our</sup> German-funding.
- Germany does not distinguish between mine and ERW clearance as in reality most mine clearance operations address both hazards. Protocol V of the CCW which will enter into force soon will provide the international legal support for our current situation on ERW clearance

To conclude, let me underline the following:

Due to other urgent global tasks, mine action budgets are likely to decrease in the future. However, in the light of meeting the deadlines for mine clearance set by the Convention, Germany remains committed to support in particular such activities which will help increase both cost effectiveness and efficiency in mine action. This includes those mine action projects that foster better coordination amongst donors, true ownership of the affected State Party, and enhanced internationally competitive bidding processes. We will, however, never lose sight of the goal which unites all delegations present in this room: a world free from the impact of anti-personnel mines. *and*  
Thank you.