



Standing Committee Meetings, 25-29 May 2009

## Mine Action Progress Report *Article 5* CROATIA

On January 01, 2009 mine hazardous area was defined on the surface of **954.5 km<sup>2</sup>**. CROMAC marked the entire mine suspected area and locations of warning signs are one of the basic elements of the Mine Information System (MIS) that is shown on the maps given to the local authorities, police administrations and individuals that have requested maps on MSA situation. On January 01, 2009 the total mine suspected area was marked with **14.986** warning signs.

According to the Humanitarian Demining Plan, in 2009 it is planned to remove mine danger from the area of **37.444.970 m<sup>2</sup>** by conducting demining operations. Funds in the amount of **318.157.000 HRK (43.3 million EUR)** have been secured for demining operations from the following sources - State Budget (55%), legal entities – investors (18%), donations (14%) and World Bank loan funds (13%). Additional **20.0 km<sup>2</sup>** is planned to be reduced with general survey activities conducted by the CROMAC.

From January-May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, mine clearance activities were conducted on the area that amounts to **13.9 km<sup>2</sup>**. In same period CROMAC has reduced additional **8.7 km<sup>2</sup>** of suspected hazardous area. As we speak there are 33 demining projects ongoing on the surface of more than **12.0 km<sup>2</sup>**, and in procurement process additional **13.0 km<sup>2</sup>** of mine hazardous area.

During the execution of these projects **1.379 mines** and **541 pieces of UXO** were found and destroyed.

In the reporting period the capacities of 27 demining companies and 1 NGO works was involved in the demining activities with **615** deminers, **695** metal detectors, **56** mine clearance machines including all types of machines (medium, light and heavy), excavators, machines for vegetation clearing and **38** mine detection dogs.

Despite the global economical recession this year will be the year with the biggest realisation of demining activities in the Republic of Croatia.

CROMAC Scan Centre now has with fully integrated mine information system that comprises mine contamination data with geo-spatial data and technologies presented through the newest digital ortho-photo. On February 25, 2009, the Ambassador of Norway in Croatia H. E. Mr. Terje Hauge officially put into operation CROMAC Mine Information System Portal (CROMAC MISportal). MISportal is a web application that enables insight into suspected hazardous areas for every Internet user. This kind of suspected hazardous area display through web application is unique in the world. Users are provided with suspected hazardous area information through detailed maps with locations of warning signs. This will significantly improve the interaction between end users and CROMAC thus providing CROMAC with updated information about terrain and simplify the distribution of maps containing mine relevant data. There are three types of users' access (public, authorized and registered) and we would like to take this opportunity to invite all interested parties to receive their access data by sending a simple request to CROMAC.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January to May 17<sup>th</sup> 2009, there were 2 mine incidents with 2 victims (2 civilians -1 killed, 1 with heavy physical injuries). Croatian Mine Action Centre has been organizing the action «April-Month of Mine Protection» eight year in a row, with the aim of preventing mine incidents since a number of analyses continue to show the need for constant reminding of people about present mine danger. The purpose of the April campaign is to draw attention to the still existing threat and informing the public on issues that mines bring, from economic development to mine incidents and constant care for mine victims along with reminding people of responsible behaviour.

Different activities of mine risk education as well as marking of mine hazardous areas, informing the public on mine danger through mine contamination maps and use of CROMAC Mine Information System (MIS), have a positive impact on mine incident prevention but they also demand additional activities of familiarizing media and public with mine action elements.

CROMAC and CROMAC-Centre for Testing, Development and Training, with the financial support of the UNDP have organized again this year the International Symposium „Humanitarian Demining 2009“ that was held from 27 to 30 April 2009 in the Town of Šibenik. Apart from the main topics “General and Technical Survey and Science and Mine Action”, a field demonstration was held as well in order to present demining machine performance during technical survey and demining operations. On the second day of the Symposium, field demonstration with 10 demining machines and new dual-sensor detector was held on test site near Town of Skradin as part of the International Symposium „Humanitarian Demining 2009“. This field segment of the Symposium has proven to be interesting to mine action community members in Croatia and worldwide precisely due to its practical value and realistic demonstration. During three days of Symposium, as many as 130 participants from 35 countries around the world had the opportunity to see an exhibition of 14 exhibitors of the equipment for mine detection, mine clearance and protection.

The proposal of the new National Mine Action Strategy in the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter: the Strategy) was made and it consists of relevant information on mine action since 1991, current status of suspected hazardous area (size, positioning, structure and impact on society and economy), a description of available mine action capacities and their performance as well as basic goals to be achieved in the period 2009 to 2019 with established methods and preconditions for their realization.

In line with the goals stated in the Draft Strategy, Draft Humanitarian Demining Plan was made for the period 2009-2011 (hereinafter: three-year plan), defining the basic tasks and their implementation for the next three-year period. Basic characteristics of planned realization in the next three-year period are: complete removal of mine danger from houses, house yards and infrastructure facilities in the Republic of Croatia as well as from over 1/2 of all mine contaminated agricultural areas.

The proposal of the new National Mine Action Strategy will soon submitted to Croatian Government for consideration and to Croatian Parliament for approval. Humanitarian Demining Plan for the period 2009-2011 will be submitted to the Croatian Government for approval.

According to the National Mine Action Strategy for the period from 2009 to 2019, it is planned to demine and reduce the MSA through mine clearance and reduction activities on the area of **756,5 km<sup>2</sup>** and through general survey activities on the area of **198 km<sup>2</sup>**. Greatest part of these activities would be performed in the period 2010-2014. In order to fulfil these plans, it is necessary to ensure additional financial means as well as deminer capacities. Deminer capacities would increase in 2010 and decrease in 2014. Mine detection dogs and demining machines capacities will suffice.

In order to fulfil the plan to remove the mine threat until 2019, it is necessary to use more funds from EU pre-accession funds and later on structural funds. Although the greatest financial part will come from the state budget, donor funds should remain at current level. Croatia is currently using World Bank loan funds for demining activities as part of the Program of socio-economic recovery on the areas of special state concern. All this, along with fulfilment of required normative, organizational and legal preconditions, will enable Croatia to reach the goals given by the National Mine Action Strategy 2009-2019 and fulfil obligations from the Ottawa Convention.

