

**Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention<sup>1</sup>  
Geneva, 25 and 29 May 2009**

**Intervention on behalf of the UN Mine Action Team  
Delivered by Gustavo Laurie (UNMAS)**

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

Mister Co-Chair, I deliver the following statement on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Team (UNMAT), comprising the 14 United Nations Departments, Agencies, Funds, and Programmes<sup>2</sup> involved in mine action.

This statement reflects United Nations activities and initiatives of relevance to the Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention since the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (24-28 November 2008).

**Overview of the General Status of Universalization**

Efforts to promote the universalization of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention continue and remain a priority to the United Nations. We note with regret that despite a number of initiatives and efforts from states and also the United Nations no country has expressed its consent to be bound by the Convention since the 2008 Intersessionals. We hope some countries would be able to do so before the Cartagena Review Conference.

During this report period, the United Nations, including at its highest level, has taken a number of opportunities to call for the universal adherence to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. The Secretary-General himself delivered a message to the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties to the APMBC on 24 November 2008; and on the occasion of the 4th International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (4 April) he highlighted that “Mine action also means adherence to the relevant legal instruments, including the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention (...).”

Also regarding the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, at least twenty-one countries hosted special events. These events provided a platform for the promotion of mine action and the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, for underlining the humanitarian impact caused by the use of landmines and other explosive remnants of war and for encouraging

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<sup>1</sup> Co-Chairs: Chile and Japan

<sup>2</sup> UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank.

governments to integrate mine action into development planning. The United Nations assisted a number of mine action programmes in holding some of these special events, as for example:

- In Mozambique the Mine Action authorities organized a joint celebration with SADC mine-affected states in the Machipanda District, near the border with Zimbabwe. The venue along the border took into consideration not only the demining activities taking place but also the cooperation between affected states.
- In Cambodia, UNDP together with Jesuit Services, Norwegian People's Aid and the Cambodian Red Cross organized an awareness-raising event for hundreds of survivors. The event served to generate awareness-raising for over 500 survivors and persons with disabilities, community leaders, monks and police. :
- In the Taiz Governate of Yemen, authorities convened an event including photo exhibitions, theatrical comedy and a documentary film in collaboration with UNDP and the Director of the Yemen Mine Action Centre.

In New York, the main event was a photographic exhibition by a Spanish and a Slovenian renowned artist, opened by the Under-Secretary-General for Information, the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Ambassadors from the Permanent Missions of Slovenia and Spain. The photos depicted a number of aspects related to mine action in a number of mine affected countries from different parts of the world.

The UN Mine Action Team provided coordinated participation at the Managua and Bangkok regional Workshops "On the Way to Cartagena", to promote the universalization and full implementation of the Convention, and we would do the same at the upcoming regional meetings scheduled for Dushanbe, Tirana and in South Africa in the run-up to the review Conference in Cartagena .

Adherence to the Treaty was also promoted in General Assembly resolutions during its last session, notably in General Assembly resolution A/RES/63/42 on the Convention, where States that have not signed the Convention were invited to accede to it without delay.

The UN Mine Action Team recognizes the fact that there are still a number of mine-affected countries that have not yet adhered to the Mine Ban Convention. We will continue to pursue, and support with our advocacy efforts, these accession efforts. In particular, through in-country capacities, those currently receiving UN support in mine action.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Iran, Laos, Lebanon, Nepal, Russia, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

## **Article 7: Transparency and the exchange of information**

Mister Co-Chair, we take this opportunity to confirm once again the readiness of the United Nations to assist States Parties in the preparation of their annual Article 7 reports. During this period, UNDP and UNMAS have provided this assistance to a number of States Parties currently receiving support from the United Nations in mine action.

Most, albeit not all, of the 25 States Parties receiving UN support in mine action have submitted their Article 7 report for the year 2008.

## **Article 9: The development and adoption of legislative, administrative and other measures.**

UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF have assisted some States Parties currently receiving mine action support from the UN in the preparation of national legislation on mine action. In doing so we found that the ICRC's website on model legislation was of great help.

## **Assistance and Cooperation**

Assistance and cooperation in mine action provided by the United Nations have benefited the following 31 States Parties during the reporting period: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Republic of Serbia, Senegal, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In addition, ten countries non-States Parties to the APMBBC; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Iran, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Russia (Chechnya), Somalia, Sri Lanka have received assistance in mine action.

A large part of our resource mobilization efforts, and in consistency with the relevant Action points in the Nairobi Action Plan, is targeted at supporting States to fulfill their obligations to the Convention.

the 2009 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects coordinated by the UN Mine Action Team, requested some US\$459 million addressing 300 mine action initiatives by 93 appealing agencies in 1 territory and in 32 countries (including 24 States Parties to the Convention).

In many affected States Parties, the UN continues to advice on mainstreaming mine action into multi-sectoral planning, broader development and reconstrciton work and associated budgeting processes to ensure the highest socio-economic impact of mine action activities. This is made in accordance with Action point 45 of the Nairobi Action Plan.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The United Nations Mine Action Team considers that the success of the Mine Ban Treaty in combating the suffering caused by landmines presents us with a model to tackle also new threats.

At the request of the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention, the UNMAT will make a special presentation on the role of the UN system in assistance and cooperation since the First Review Conference. This presentation will focus particularly on the financial mechanisms serving the implementation of the Convention.

The Treaty has clearly worked as an inspiration for mine action across the globe.

Thank you.