



**14th MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**

Geneva, 30 November - 4 December 2015

**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
ON CLEARANCE**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of Croatia I would like to express our pleasure at participating in the work of the 14th MSP to the APMBC. I can assure you of my delegation's full support in your endeavor as the President of this Meeting and commend you on your diligent work so far.

Since the beginning of the year Suspected Hazardous Area (SHA) was reduced by 57.4 km² through mine clearance activities and non-technical survey activities. Current SHA is 487 km², which extends through nine counties and 70 cities and municipalities, while estimates indicate that the SHA is contaminated with about 44.000 mines. The entire SHA is clearly marked with 12.786 mine danger signs.

During demining operations 2.704 anti-personnel mines and anti-tank mines and 1.683 unexploded ordnances (UXO) were found and destroyed.

These results were achieved with 48 demining companies, 662 deminers, 86 auxiliary workers, 708 metal detectors, 63 demining machines and 42 mine detection dogs.

So far this year, a total of 52.8 million € were contracted for mine clearance activities. The major funding source for mine action in Croatia this year are EU funds in amount of 31 million €, followed by the State Budget (18.2 million €), and public and state owned companies and investors with 2.7 million €, and finally foreign governments, organizations and individual donors (0.9 million €).

We are continuing excellent cooperation with the Ministry of Interior on mine risk education through program "Less arms, less tragedy" and with other relevant actors from civil society. In 2015 there were 59 different educational

activities through which more than 6,000 persons in 42 towns and municipalities received information on mine problem.

It is important to emphasize that the current Croatian Government expressed additional sensitivity and determination to finally solve the mine problem and systematize mine action activities in Croatia, by establishing, at the beginning of its mandate, the Office for Mine Action, thus providing to the entire Croatian mine system attention and support it deserves. Also, the annual budget for demining during the mandate of this government has not decreased, despite the economic crisis. It was actually significantly increased (doubled) through the absorption of EU funds for financing mine clearance activities where those serve as a precondition for the implementation of development projects. Croatia will therefore continue to apply for the EU funds with projects for integrated development and rehabilitation of the war affected areas, especially these where the mine clearance is precondition for the future development projects.

In 2015 we recorded two mine incidents involving three deminers. In the first a deminer was severely injured while in the second, one deminer sustained injuries and the other was unfortunately killed. (Since 2013 we haven't had civilian mine victims).

Thank you.



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**ANNEX TO THE STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
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Completion of the demining of the Vukovar-Srijem County

The completion of works at the last demining worksite in the Vukovar-Srijem County means that the target set by the Humanitarian Demining Plan for 2015 has been achieved - complete removal of mine danger from the area of Vukovar-Srijem County, which is the third county that has been declared mine-free during the mandate of the current Croatian Government. Certificates of demining of mine suspected areas were signed on 10 November 2015 and will be awarded to local authorities at the special ceremony.

According to preliminary estimates, the total mine suspected area (MSA) in the Vukovar-Srijem County amounted to 107.2 square kilometers, or 4.4% of the total area of the County and encompassed 19 towns and municipalities, or 63.3% of the total number of cities and municipalities in the County.

During demining activities a total of 16.440 mines were found and destroyed, of which 7.281 anti-personnel mines and 9.159 anti-tank mines and 72.586 pieces of unexploded ordnance (UXO).

Around 107 million Euros have been invested in the demining of the Vukovar-Srijem County. State budget accounted for 53% of the total funds for demining, followed by legal entities/ investors who participated with 20%, the World Bank with 15%, and domestic and foreign donors, with a share of 12%.

Mines and unexploded ordnance scattered across this county took a heavy toll on its citizens in the period from 1996 till 2015, injuring 108 people, of which 39 fatally.