



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Third Review Conference of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Statement on Clearing mined areas

Agenda item 7 (c)

Maputo, Tuesday 24 June 2014

Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva Office, UNMAS

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action¹ (IACG-MA), comprising 14 United Nations entities involved in mine action.

Clearing all the anti-personnel mines in mined areas under the jurisdiction or control of each State Party is what ultimately eradicates the humanitarian, socioeconomic and environmental threats posed by anti-personnel mines. It also contributes to paving the way for sustainable peace and development. This is why Article 5 obligations are at the core of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Since the Second Review Conference in 2009, thirteen States Parties have completed their clearance obligations under this Article. There are still thirty-one States Parties that have yet to fulfill their Article 5 obligations. The United Nations provides assistance in mine action to most of them, in particular through the field presence of UNICEF², UNDP³ and UNMAS⁴. This support varies from country to country and could

¹ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer status), and the World Bank (Observer status).

² In 2013-4 UNICEF has assisted more than twenty national authorities, including in twelve States Parties, in their efforts to develop mine risk education programmes, to promote community support for the demining process, to prioritize risk reduction activities through victim assistance and injury surveillance, and to prevent civilian access to minefields.

³ In 2013-4 UNDP supported national mine action authorities in 30 countries in implementing survey, land release, clearance and quality assurance. Through support to policy development, strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Lebanon, Senegal, etc.), UNDP has ensured clearance contribute to recovery, development, reconciliation and livelihoods. Also UNDP has supported national mine action authorities with aid coordination, resource mobilization and capacity development in the area of contracting and tendering (e.g. Azerbaijan trust fund, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Libya, Mozambique, Tajikistan), thus ensuring the most efficient use of available resources for clearance.

involve the facilitation of activities as different as training in land release techniques (technical and non-technical survey and demining), information management, resource mobilization, planning and prioritization of clearance operations, or mine risk education

Also, the United Nations has been actively involved in the efforts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Yemen and Zimbabwe to process or prepare their Article 5 extension requests.

The United Nations continues to attach utmost importance to the completion of Article 5 obligations and takes this opportunity to urge, all the relevant thirty-one States Parties to meet their deadlines in a timely manner. The United Nations is deeply concerned by the fact that many States Parties have missed the opportunity to comply with their initial 10-year deadline for clearance operations, thus being compelled to submit extension requests.

An important challenge for States Parties to meet their clearance obligations is the lack of sufficient and sustainable funding, both at national and international levels. We will elaborate on this matter during our statement on assistance and cooperation. The United Nations calls for the attention of States that are able to do so to commit appropriate resources as provided by Article 6 of the Convention.

Mr. President,

This year, the international community has witnessed once again the challenging impacts of natural disasters happening in mine contaminated areas. In late 2013 an emergency response was required in Cambodia when mines surfaced during flooding. Equally, during the recent floods in Southeast Europe, for example, warning signs have been washed away leaving the perimeters of minefields unmarked and some mines have also been moved from previously marked areas. While these new threats are being addressed⁵, including with the support of the United Nations, they demonstrate how natural disasters and extreme weather conditions could impede or, indeed, derail progress towards meeting clearance obligations.

Finally, the IACG-MA would like to thank Japan and Mozambique, co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, for their efforts in encouraging states to fulfil Article 5 obligations.

Thank you.

⁴ In 2013-4 UNMAS assisted national authorities in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan in their efforts to comply with their clearance obligations by facilitating activities such as trainings in technical and non-technical survey and clearance, information management support, resource mobilization efforts, capacity building on prioritisation of clearance tasks, and the provision of clearance and safety equipment.

⁵ UNDP for example has deployed mine action expertise into the Balkans regional Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and UNICEF supported emergency assessments and mine risk education in both Cambodia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.