



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

2015 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

High Contracting Parties: Statement on General Exchange of Views Geneva, Thursday 12 November 2015

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

Mr. Chairperson,

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

On behalf of the IACG-MA, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Chairperson of the 2015 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), as I would like also to congratulate our colleague from the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs who was nominated as Secretary-General of the Meeting.

The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018 calls for compliance and implementation of the CCW and its Protocols. Amended Protocol II on mines, booby-traps and other devices and Protocol V on explosive remnants of war, are two instruments of international humanitarian law at the root of our mine action-related work.

The request for United Nations humanitarian assistance is raising, as conflicts are increasing and intensifying. Countries with ongoing conflicts, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen are in particularly urgent need for a rapid and effective mine action response. In several instances, anti-vehicle mines as well as anti-personnel shrapnel mines are buried under routes being used by civilian populations, as well as by humanitarians and peacekeepers.

Similarly, the General Assembly recently expressed its concern over the impact of improvised explosive devices. When adopting without a vote the draft resolution on assistance in mine action on 16 October, its fourth Committee recognized for the first time “the humanitarian threat posed by improvised explosive devices following conflicts”.

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).



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As an example: in South Sudan, in July, a World Food Programme (WFP) bulldozer hit an anti-tank (AT) mine during road constructions between Pageri and Opari in Eastern Equatoria. Following this incident, upon WFP's request, UNMAS route verification and clearance teams were deployed to support the WFP road construction project to deliver food and services to populations in remote areas. In this important forum, the United Nations wishes to highlight the importance of further addressing the issue of anti-vehicle mines, under the agenda item on mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM).

Mr. Chairperson,

The United Nations encourages High Contracting Parties to use the CCW framework to further explore ways to ensure that anti-vehicle mines no longer harm civilians, impede the delivery of humanitarian aid or obstruct social and economic development. The United Nations is convinced that the CCW is an appropriate framework in which further discussions about MOTAPM ought to be held, and is committed to providing High Contracting Parties, and others, with expertise and knowledge, to move this agenda forward.

Finally, the United Nations would like to once again congratulate Algeria, Grenada, and Palestine for joining the CCW, and encourages all other non-High Contracting Parties Member States to follow suit.

Thank you.