



**Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 7- 8 June 2018**

**INTERVENTION BY THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
ON COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE**

Thank you Madam President.

With regards to the preliminary observations made by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, we can inform about the following.

Research and development

- In November, 2017 the project entitled “Biological Methods (Bees) for Explosive Detection” financed by the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program began. The coordinator and initiator of the project is the Croatian Center for Testing, Development and Training Ltd. (CTDT) and partners in the project are the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences from the University of Zagreb, the University of Banja Luka from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the University St. Andrews from the United Kingdom. Duration of the project is three years and the goal is to develop innovative methods and technologies for landmine detection through the advancement and integration of current state-of-the-art techniques (honeybees) in combination with explosive vapor sensors and advanced imaging techniques.
- In May and October, 2017 at the Croatian test site Benkovac, a research team from the University of Manchester conducted a trial of experimental detection equipment. The aim of the project is to help counter the problems of discrimination of targets in uncooperative (highly mineralized) soils and to research more advanced electromagnetic detectors. The lead partner in this project is the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing of the University of Zagreb in Croatia while the trial is financed by the UK-based charity “Find a Better Way”.

Training

One of the main fields of expertise that Croatia can offer to interesting parties is training. Training courses are conducted in accordance with IMAS and Testing and Evaluation Protocols.

- During October, 2017 the CTDT Ltd. conducted a training for 18 employees of the Russian company *Emercom Demining* on the subject of mine clearance management whose employees gained qualifications for project managers, site managers, group leaders and internal control inspectors.

Bilateral visits

- In November, 2017 we hosted a high-level military delegation of the Kingdom of the Saudi Arabia. Guests were introduced with the roles and activities of all mine action authorities in Croatia, with a special emphasis on a system of the airborne non-technical survey from a drone, training courses and quality management.
- In December, 2017 we hosted a high-level delegation of Ukraine. The visit was facilitated by the Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to Ukraine and organized under the auspices of the State Working Group on cooperation between Croatia and Ukraine. The visit explored the possibility of Croatian mine action *know how* adaptation/implementation in Ukraine.

Conferences and workshops

- During March and April 2017, the Regional Senior Managers' Course in ERW and Mine Action was held in Croatia, organized by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR) at James Madison University (JMU), and with support from the Croatian mine action partners.¹ The Course gathered 20 participants, attending from CWD programs in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. The course strengthened regional partnerships and collaboration and focused on issues critical to the region, including program sustainability, small arms and light weapons, physical security and stockpile management, and managing programs through transitional phases.

¹ The Course is funded by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

Thank you.



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**INTERVENTION BY THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
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Project “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration”

On 27 March 2018, Croatian Minister of Regional Development and EU funds (Gabrijela Žalac) signed Project Implementation Agreements within the Swiss-Croatian Cooperation Program with representatives of numerous institutions involved in the implementation of this Program. One of the projects is “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration”, consisting of demining of a protected forest area and the socio-economic empowerment and reintegration of mine/UXO survivors. For these purposes, a grant of 3.5m CHF has been provided to the Croatian Mine Action Centre (CROMAC) and the Government Office for Mine Action (GOMA).

The signing ceremony officially marked the start of implementation of the project activities in which CROMAC serves as the Executing Agency, while GOMA is the Intermediate Body of the Project. It is also important to note how the budget of the project will be divided: 80% for the demining activities and 20% for the socio-economic programs.

Contribution of this project will be two-folded. First, security conditions for people living in the designated county will be ensured through mine clearance in the parts of heavily mined forest, which in turn would serve as a precondition for economic development of this area. Second, demining will be followed by implementation of concrete measures for survivors and persons with disabilities in general.

The overall goal of this project is to achieve a safe and secure environment for the local population with increased economic opportunities in terms of land use and individual socio-economic empowerment, better coordination between different institutions responsible for care for survivors and enhanced capability of actions and resources planning for survivors.

We would like to use this opportunity to once again, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, thank the Government of the Swiss Confederation, for its concrete support to mine action efforts in Croatia.