



## **United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**

**Standing Committee on  
Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies  
(Co-Chairs: Indonesia and Zambia)  
Geneva, 23 May 2012**

**Intervention  
Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS  
on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA)**

Thank you Mister/Madame Co-Chair,

I am delivering the following statement on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising 14 UN partners involved in mine action.

Allow me first of all to congratulate Guinea-Bissau and Jordan for announcing the completion of their obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. These countries have made a great contribution towards meeting the common vision of a world free of antipersonnel mines.

We welcome the updates provided during this Standing Committee. We also look forward to receiving more updates on Thursday, during the small group discussions on mine clearance related issues.

Last year, States Parties granted Article 5 extension requests to Algeria, Chile, the Republic of Congo, DRC and Eritrea. The United Nations is committed to continuing its support to these countries, as well to all other affected States Parties that have been granted extension requests, in the implementation of their respective national plans.

This year four States Parties - Afghanistan, the most heavily mine-affected country in the world, Angola, Cyprus and Zimbabwe - have submitted Article 5 extension requests. The UN Mine Action entities provide a wide range of assistance in mine action to these four States Parties, including in the preparation and implementation of their national plans on mine action.

Overall, the United Nations assists over 29 states parties to the Convention<sup>1</sup> and its support is consistent with their national obligations. Some of these states have already

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cyprus, DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Philippines, Senegal, Sudan, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

complied with Article 5 obligations, but continue to be significantly affected by explosive remnants of war, thus requiring on-going assistance and cooperation from the international community in terms of clearance and risk education, and also in many instances on long-term victim assistance.

The United Nations Completion Initiative is in the process of being revitalized with the support of the Mine Action Support Group, with Australia as Chair. This initiative is designed to help States that are in the final stages of clearance to ‘cross the finish line’, capitalize on their sustained efforts and not become a victim of their own success. It is designed to help maintain hard won momentum. The United Nations and States Parties alike hope it will serve as an effective framework to promote the timely completion of Article 5 and other treaty obligations. The United Nations would like to strongly encourage those in a position to do so to lend their support. In pooling our collective resources, support to these States will also generate direct humanitarian and development benefits in addition to demonstrating how the Convention continues to produce impressive results.

Mr./Ms. Co-Chair,

The Eleventh Meeting of States Parties noted that the Convention was silent on how to address situations where States Parties, which have never reported Article 5 obligation, discover previously unknown mined areas. We welcome the efforts of the Presidency and the two Co-Chairs to bring special attention to this issue this year, including on a means to address this matter.

Mine/ERW risk education remains an essential part of mine action activities. The UN is interested in hearing more from field programmes and implementing partners on the implementation of the revised MRE International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and if there are questions or comments to share in this regard.

Speaking more broadly, mine action is not limited to the impact of only landmines, although, of course, that is the focus of the Convention; in many countries the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) poses an even greater threat to people’s safety. Even in situations where the threat from landmines has been significantly reduced by clearance of known mined areas, there may continue to be a significant threat to civilian populations, either from the presence of landmines in unmarked areas, or from existing UXO or other ERW contamination. In such contexts, ongoing mine action programming – with the support of donors and international cooperation - for UXO/ERW clearance, risk reduction through MRE or other measures, and victim assistance continue to remain critical.

We would also like to take this opportunity to note that the establishment of surveillance systems can make a significant contribution to strengthening mine action programmes, especially clearance and mine/ERW risk education. The systematic collection of incident information related to types of weapons, geographic location, and victim information disaggregated by sex and age and demographics enables the availability of dynamic information that can be used for, amongst other things, more effective monitoring and

measurement of the impact of landmines as well as the impact of mine action programmes.

Such systems also improve targeting and adapting of programmes as necessary to reach the most affected areas and groups for landmine clearance and mine risk education. While enabling an effective response and planning capacity, effective monitoring and measurement also support national coordination, including for the establishment of mine action priorities, including for clearance.

Finally, we would like to remind this assembly of the significance of mainstreaming all aspects of mine action related work, whether it is conducted by the United Nations or others. Linking mine action to development has been shown to be an impact multiplier many times over. Indeed, taking into account gender needs and requirements has proven to increase the effectiveness of Mine Action policies and programmes. In this context, the United Nations would like to encourage all partners to use Revised Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes (2010) and view programmes through a livelihoods lens whenever possible.

Thank you.