

Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Related Technologies of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Geneva, 05 February 2003.

Opening Intervention on Progress made and Challenges faced in Mine Action
by Sara Sekkenes - NPA on behalf of the Mine Action Working Group of the ICBL.

Co-Chairs, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You may recall that the Mine Action Working Group (MAWG) of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) at various occasions has raised the issue of Article 5 reporting and the inadequate data and information available on the status of mine action programs and progress made in relation to clearance of suspected mined areas, as referred to also in the Co-chairs notes to meeting participants. As a result, the MAWG called for standardized and transparent reporting on mine action activities and thus, improving the data for reporting on Article 5 provisions in the Article 7 report.

Status and Progress Reporting of Mine Action

The reporting should among other things and as a bare minimum, include information regarding data on impact and of extent and size of suspected mine infested areas, and a clear definition and registration of areas marked and cleared or otherwise discharged of suspicion, i.e. survey levels and, total funding with activity breakdowns for mine action by donors and recipients. The information on funding being of particularly importance for cost-efficiency analysis of mine action activities on global levels.

As a result of the presentation given by the Mine Action Working Group to this forum at the January intersessionals of 2002¹, the working group met with the Co-chairs and Co-Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee for Mine Clearance at that time, the UN, the GICHD and other concerned parties, to continue the discussion regarding the apparent and worrying lack of sufficient and adequate data on mine action activities around the world.

The current Standing Committee supported the continued emphasis on this issue and it is with pleasure to now report that UNMAS is soon to present the work done in collaboration with the GICHD with input from mine action NGOs addressing standardized reporting as it pertains to UN supported mine action centers. The last details are yet to be included but the results so far will suffice for a considerable improvement of the Article 7 reports in matters concerning Article 5 and mine action in general. The template is furthermore developed as an IMSMA feature.

¹ http://www.gichd.org/mbc/iwp/SC_jan02/speeches_mcl.htm

Currently, there seems to be a slight confusion in terms of the appropriate reporting procedures and formats, i.e. where and how to include information regarding clearance programs. Efforts have been made to improve this matter, for example through the reporting support mechanism by VERTIC, however further specific work is perhaps needed regarding Article 5 and the standardized reporting template will improve and simplify the procedures significantly. I will not take the pleasure away from UNMAS to present the initiative but just briefly point at issues covered in the drafted reporting template:

- **Program Overview**
 - *Extent of Mine/UXO Contamination* as identified through Impact Surveys and General Surveys; high, medium and low impact with number of affected communities, number of affected populations, number of mined areas and size of mined area in km²,
 - *Objectives and Achievements of the mine action program* as described by the national mine action center,
 - *Problems encountered* as described by the mine action center,
 - *Organizations and assets deployed*, information including total number of staff in clearance, mine risk education, coordination and support and other core assets such as number of mine detecting dogs and number of mechanical devices.

- **Impact of problem,**
 - *Mine accidents*, recent and compounded mine accidents, including number of accidents reported in relation to age, sex and gravity of injury,
 - *Demining accidents*, including number and effect of accident.

- **Progress of Mine Action Operations**
 - *Clearance operations*, including report on area reduced, area marked and area cleared in m² as well as number of AP, AT and UXO destroyed,
 - *Mine risk education*, including direct and indirect beneficiaries of the mine risk education activities by age and sex.

This will have far reaching effect on the ability to report adequately with the necessary data and information for progress report in Article 7, global cost-efficiency and benefit analysis, and overall achievement in relation to the provisions of the Convention. As a result of last years attention to this matter, it is encouraging to see an increasing number of State Parties referring to deadlines for compliance with Article 5 obligations when reporting on their mine action activities.

This, in particular as it relates to the humanitarian imperative of the Mine Ban Treaty providing mine-affected countries with necessary information to develop

strategic mine action plans prioritizing areas of potential threat and productive land in order to diminish the impact landmines have on affected societies and gain control of the problem in due time of stipulated deadlines.

National strategic plans, with increased detailed information and outline of activities for the future will no doubt feed into the efforts being done in resource mobilization for mine action, offering improved allocation of mine action resources and transparent and goal oriented results. Plans, which with justified reasons target the most impacted communities for clearance and mine risk educational activities, thereby decreasing the risk for new mine victims and clearing land under high demand for potentially productive and/or subsistence activities.

So far so good, as it compiles the data of national mine action centers in mine affected countries. Ideally, NGOs, commercial companies and other mine action operators should report to national mine action centers wherefore also these activities and performances would be captured. It should be in the interest of all parties to embrace the introduction of a standardized reporting mechanism, be that operators, mine affected and non-affected state parties as well as non-state parties.

Therefore, the Mine Action Working Group would like to take this opportunity to suggest and encourage mine affected countries to support the introduction of the standardized reporting template, by emphasizing through their national mine action centers to *all* mine action operators active in their respective countries that this would be the preferred reporting format. It also holds for donors to encourage recipients of funds for mine action to follow suit, let alone operators themselves, be that the UN, the NGOs or commercial contractors.

We can also report on other constructive activities developed during the past 12 months in attempts to shed light upon further needs of and within mine action. The Survey Working Group with representatives from the UN, NGO operators, the Survey Action Center and the Cranfield University, to name a few, are heavily engaged in impact survey utilization discussions and possible add-on activities to further improve and expand its utility.

Various pilot projects have already been launched in cooperation with national mine action centers to support the development of realistic national strategic mine action plans through training of MAC staff at various levels, survey utilization projects and direct training in strategic plan production.

The strategic plans should ideally cover the necessary work to be undertaken prior to respective deadlines in order to deal with all high priority areas and as far as possible, in becoming a mine-free State Party. Mine action data reporting on performances up to date would mirror our collective and cooperative efforts and be the basis for strategic plans to solve the legacy of the use of AP mines worldwide.

With reference to the upcoming deadlines of some 23 countries in 2009, with an additional 21 in 2010, 11 and 12, and the opportunity the Review Conference in 2004 provides us with, the Mine Action Working Group would strongly encourage mine affected state parties, to develop strategic mine action plans based on data the suggested reporting templates can provide. Furthermore, to request support and cooperation from the mine action community, including all fellow State Parties, donors countries, UN and the NGOs, other mine action operators and last but not least, the mine affected communities themselves who better than anyone know how to set priorities straight in Mine Action.

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Destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas

1. *Each State Party undertakes to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than ten years after the entry into force of this Convention for that State Party.*
2. *Each State Party shall make every effort to identify all areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced and shall ensure as soon as possible that all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control are perimeter-marked, monitored and protected by fencing or other means, to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians, until all anti-personnel mines contained therein have been destroyed. The marking shall at least be to the standards set out in the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, as amended on 3 May 1996, annexed to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.*
3. *If a State Party believes that it will be unable to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines referred to in paragraph 1 within that time period, it may submit a request to a Meeting of the States Parties or a Review Conference for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of such anti-personnel mines, for a period of up to ten years.*
4. *Each request shall contain:*
 - a) *The duration of the proposed extension;*
 - b) *A detailed explanation of the reasons for the proposed extension, including:*
 - (i) *The preparation and status of work conducted under national demining programs;*
 - (ii) *The financial and technical means available to the State Party for the destruction of all the anti-personnel mines; and*
 - (iii) *Circumstances which impede the ability of the State Party to destroy all the anti-personnel mines in mined areas;*
 - c) *The humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of the extension; and*
 - d) *Any other information relevant to the request for the proposed extension.*
5. *The Meeting of the States Parties or the Review Conference shall, taking into consideration the factors contained in paragraph 4, assess the request and decide by a majority of votes of States Parties present and voting whether to grant the request for an extension period.*
6. *Such an extension may be renewed upon the submission of a new request in accordance with paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of this Article. In requesting a further extension period a State Party shall submit relevant additional information on what has been undertaken in the previous extension period pursuant to this Article.*

The following information is retrieved from reports as found on the Art. 7 web page². In some cases, submitted annexes cannot be accessed on the web, thus some of the information below may not reflect full reporting. As of 3 February 2003 the following mine affected State Parties have reported on Article 5 in their transparency report:

Mine Affected State Party	Article 7 (no. of reports submitted)	Form C (report on location of mined areas)	Form F (report on status of MA programs)	Form G (report on MA clearance)	Mine Clearance deadlines
Afghanistan	due Aug. 2003				2012
Angola	due June 2003				2012
Albania	1	yes	yes	yes	2010
Algeria	due Sep. 2002				2011
Bangladesh	1	no	no	no	2011
Bosnia i Herzegovina	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Cambodia	3	yes	yes	yes	2010
Chad	2	yes	yes	yes	2009
Chile	1	yes	yes	yes	2011
Colombia	1	yes	yes	no	2011
Republic of Congo	1	yes	yes, stockpiles	yes, stockpiles	2011
Congo, DR of	due April 2003				2012
Croatia	4	yes	yes	yes	2009
Cyprus	due Dec. 2003				2012
Djibouti	1	yes	yes	yes	2009
Ecuador	4	yes	yes	yes	2009
El Salvador	2	no	no	no	2009
Eritrea	due July 2002				2011
Guatemala	2	yes	no	no	2009
Guinea Bissau	1	yes	yes	yes	2011
Honduras	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Hungary	4	no	no	no	2009
Jordan	4	yes	yes	yes	2009
Liberia	due Nov. 2000				2010
Macedonia FYR of	2	yes	yes (clearance reported in Form C)	no	2009
Malawi	due Aug. 1999				2009
Mauritania	2	yes	yes	no	2011
Mozambique	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Namibia	due Aug. 1999				2009
Nicaragua	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Niger	due Feb. 2000				2009
Peru	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Philippines	4	no	no	no	2010
Rwanda	1	yes	yes	no	2010
Senegal	3	yes	yes	yes	2009
Sierra Leone	due Mar. 2002				2011
Swaziland	1	yes	yes	no	2009
Tajikistan	1	yes	yes	yes	2010
Thailand	4	yes	yes	yes	2009
Tunisia	1	yes	yes	no	2010
Uganda	1	yes	no	no	2009
Yemen	4	yes	yes	yes	2009
Zambia	1	yes	yes	no	2011
Zimbabwe	2	yes	yes	yes	2009

² The information can be found at <http://disarmament.un.org/MineBan.nsf>