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**Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and
Mine Action Technologies**

Intervention by Ambassador Johan Nordenfelt (Sweden)

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I would like to contribute to today's discussion by highlighting a number of issues that we believe are critical to the successful implementation of the Convention.

Mine Action as a Development Issue

Achieving our common objectives requires the lasting commitment of communities and governments to mine action and, specifically, to the task of mine clearance in accordance with article 5 of the Convention. Typically, the presence of mines and explosive remnants of war have **wide-ranging socio-economic implications** that go far beyond their more obvious humanitarian effects. As such, we believe that it is vital that mine action programs are **integrated into the relevant national development planning processes**, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). By recognizing that mine action constitutes a central component of national development, adequate resources and attention can be committed.

The primary responsibility for the implementation of the Convention rests with each State Party. But **donors must also make changes** to affect a shift towards a more long-term approach to mine action. Specifically, donors should be encouraged to **integrate mine action activities into their longer-term assistance strategies**, allowing development accounts to be utilized rather than more limited humanitarian funding. The national needs and priorities of mine-affected countries should clearly guide this process. Here, I would like to emphasize the importance of community ownership and long-term capacity building.

In helping to securing the much-needed funds, we would also welcome a **greater involvement by the Bretton Woods Institutions**.

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A Holistic Approach to Mines and ERW

I would also like to underscore the need for a **holistic approach with regard to mine action and the clearance of the explosive remnants of war**. Although the new Protocol to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) regulates the legal conditions for the clearance of unexploded and abandoned ordnance following a conflict, our work could undoubtedly benefit from a comprehensive approach. After all, on a practical level, achieving sustainable development and progress towards the Millennium Goals in post-conflict communities demands that the effects of mines and explosive remnants of war are addressed simultaneously. We should also remember that from the perspective of many of those affected, the presence of mines and UXOs represent indistinguishable threats.

In this regard, I should note that **Sweden seeks to cover both mine- and UXO-related issues** through its mine action assistance policy. Swedish assistance in this area amounts to over 100 million Swedish Crowns annually. It is provided in support of broad clearance, risk education, and victim assistance programs.

Finally, we also feel strongly that the **victims** of anti-personnel mines and the explosive remnants of war **should enjoy the same rights** with regard to care, rehabilitation and support for reintegration into their communities. Again, we should not allow our technical classifications to result in new human tragedies.

Thank you.