



Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action

12th Meeting of States Parties to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention

Statement on General Exchange of Views

Agenda item 8

Geneva, 3 December 2012

Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, UNMAS Director

Mister President,

Allow me first to congratulate you on your election as President of the 12th Meetings of States Parties to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention.

I want to assure you the full cooperation and support of my delegation and to wish you and the members of the Bureau every success in your endeavors. I would like also to commend the work accomplished by the Cambodian presidency.

The Convention assigned a number of responsibilities to the United Nations Secretary-General, such as serving as Depository of the Convention and convening the Meetings of States Parties.

The Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention remains a key legal instrument framing the United Nations mine action. This is why during the course of this week; I will be delivering statements on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action on various agenda items directly related to the work of the United Nations in mine action.

The people of affected countries, the heart of this Convention, drive the activities carried out by the United Nations together with civil society partners and the support of the donors' community.

Indeed, core activities in mine action are driven by the key provisions of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention. Clearance of antipersonnel mines, victim assistance and stockpile destruction are core elements of UN cooperation and assistance to affected states. In this connection, the United Nations also supports States Parties comply with the Convention, including with specific deadlines. Because mine action pertains to the work of the UN in peace and security, human rights and humanitarian affairs, it is an essential component of peace-building and a critical enabler of development. In the spirit of the Convention, in particular in the partnership with all concerned, the UN contributes to a safer world and to the common vision of a mine-free world.

The United Nations is currently supporting over thirty States Parties, including the most mine-affected ones, such as Afghanistan, and two of the latest countries to accede the Convention, Somalia and South Sudan. The UN support is tailored to the need and requirements of those states and in most cases include all five pillars of mine action, in addition to national capacity-building, resource mobilization and with full integration of gender perspectives in plans and programmes.

We would like to echo the statement of Finland: “(A)s demining will continue to be a challenge both in scale and complexity, we must mobilize new donors to support Humanitarian mine action”.

Mister President, the UN needs this funding to continue its work and enable local NGO and operators to assist their home countries.

As mentioned earlier by the Secretary-General, the Convention has made a meaningful difference around the globe; and “(O)ur common action against this horrendous weapon must continue”. I want to assure you that my delegation, in particular the representatives of mine action programmes present this week, will continue to strive to eradicate the threat and its inhuman impact.

Lastly, I would like to echo the call made this morning by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and others in commemorating today the International Day of Persons with Disability. This year’s theme is “Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all”. This Day is a reminder of the wide scope of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention; it also reinforces the message carried out by the ICBL and other brave activities for decades. We are all here working together to make people free to move, survivors regain their dignity and nations rebuild their path to a vibrant economy.

Thank you,