



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

14th Meeting of State Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Statement on matters related to the mandate of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance Geneva, 2 December 2015

Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva office, UNMAS

Mr. President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)¹, comprising United Nations entities involved in mine action.

The United Nations thanks you for the report on the activities, and consultations, of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, including with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The United Nations shares the views of the Committee that international cooperation and assistance is an essential part of the Convention and that stronger partnerships between States, international organizations and civil society helps minimize and eventually end the suffering caused by antipersonnel mines. Indeed, this is recognized by the General Assembly's Fourth Committee with its resolution on Assistance in Mine Action adopted without a vote on 16 October.

The following are some highlights from the resolution that will frame our work in mine action, and consequently in support of the implementation of the Convention, for the following two years.

The resolution calls upon States in a position to do so to support mine-affected States, upon request and as appropriate by providing, *inter alia*:

- a) assistance for the establishment and development of mine action capacities;
- b) support to national programmes to reduce the risks from mines and explosive remnants of war; and
- c) technical assistance.

¹ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer).



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In addition, South-South, regional and sub-regional cooperation, with the assistance of the United Nations and others, is also highlighted in O.P. 2 of the resolution, in concurrence with the second recommendation by the Committee on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

Member States also stressed the importance of cooperation and coordination in mine action and of devoting existing resources to that end, emphasizing at the same time the primary responsibility of national authorities in this regard, as well as the role of the United Nations, with UNMAS as its coordinator for mine action, and other relevant organizations.

Funding shortages are a major contributing factor to States Parties missing their annual clearance targets. We have just heard Minister Wais Ahmad Barmak from Afghanistan, in his earlier statement, expressing that without sustainable funding support, the goal of a mine-free Afghanistan in 2023 is at risk. One cannot allow funding shortfalls to contribute to missed targets.

Mr. President,

From O.P. 3 (c), of the resolution mentioned earlier, the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly urges all to provide: “ [...] Reliable, predictable, timely and, where possible, multi-annual contributions for mine action activities, including through national mine action efforts and mine action programmes of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, including those relating to rapid response in humanitarian emergencies, victim assistance and mine risk education, especially at the local level, as well as through relevant national, regional and global trust funds, including the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action [...]”.

The United Nations also supports relevant regional initiatives. For instance, in collaboration with the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), UNMAS has supported the African Union in the elaboration of the *AU Mine Action and ERW Strategic Framework 2014-2017*. This regional framework defines a work plan of activities, including training, workshops or exchanges on lessons learned, designed to enhance the capacities of AU Member States and operations to deal with a wide range of explosive hazardous threats such as landmines. The United Nations seizes this opportunity to encourage States to provide financial support to the implementation of this Strategic Framework.

In closing, the United Nations, stresses once more, how critical it is to ensure sufficient and sustainable donor support to affected States.

Thank you.