



# **Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

**Afghanistan Statement on Cooperation and Assistance**

15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of State Parties

To

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Santiago, Chile

28 Nov - 1 December 2016

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We have established a good working relationship with the mine action programmes of Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, South Sudan, and recently with Colombia. I would like to present some of the bilateral cooperation between Afghanistan and these programmes since the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of State Parties:

- a) The cooperation with our neighboring country, Tajikistan, takes multifaceted approach, varying from expertise sharing to facilitation of demining and quality management. Upon a request from Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre, in August 2015, a group of four experts from the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan had a mission to Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Afghan experts evaluated quality management, operation processes, Information Management and GIS systems of Tajikistan mine action centre, and subsequently provided them with 17 recommendations for further improvements.
- b) In the following year, from 21 – 24 October 2016, an Afghan delegation visited the Tajikistan mine action centre once again. The aim of this visit was to learn the mechanism used by UNDP in support of Tajikistan mine action centre, and to apply the best practices in Afghanistan for promotion of mine action national ownership. During this visit, the Tajikistan mine action centre offered to support Afghan mine action authority with implementation of external quality assurance and quality control of demining teams working in the Afghan-Tajik border districts. **Since 2012**, Tajikistan mine action centre has facilitated demining of Afghan border districts from the Tajik territory. Access to those districts from the Afghanistan side is challenging due to geographical limitations. Tajikistan has also facilitated Afghan quality management inspectors to access these districts via Tajikistan. This time, they kindly offered to utilize their own quality management personnel and report their findings to Afghan mine action authority. The offer was welcomed by the Afghan delegation. A proposal for the required training to Tajik Quality Management Inspectors was submitted to the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, which promised to support this project. I would like to thank the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre for their cooperation.
- c) Tajikistan mine action centre also facilitated a donor coordination conference for the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from 18 – 21 April 2016. The said conference was funded by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement under the US Department of State, and aimed to mobilize resources in support of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan.

- d) Our cooperation with other nations mentioned at the beginning is also very rewarding. In November 2015, Afghanistan hosted a delegation from Colombia mine action authority. It was an exchange visit where the MAPA provided an opportunity for the colleagues from the DAICMA to see the Afghan mine action programme processes such as planning, priority setting, information management, operations and so on.
  
- e) In May 2016, two Afghan officials participated in the Forum of Experts in Support of Demining Initiatives for Colombia, and shared experiences and best practices of Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan with Colombia's national mine action authority. In November 2015, the Afghanistan hosted a delegation from Colombia mine action authority. It was an exchange visit where the MAPA provided an opportunity for the colleagues from the DAICMA to see the Afghan mine action programme processes such as planning, priority setting, information management, operations and so on.

Thank you,