



**17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**  
Geneva, 26 – 30 November 2018

**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE**

Thank you Madam President.

We would like to thank the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for its work and observations.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union (EU).

The jubilee 15<sup>th</sup> International Symposium “Mine Action 2018”, the annual international gathering of mine action experts, was held under the high patronage of the President of the Republic of Croatia (Madam Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović) from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The Symposium drew attendance of 170 participants from 31 countries and 5 continents, representing ministries, state institutions, international organizations, equipment producers, academia and civil society.

For the third time, the role of a partner country was introduced – Bosnia and Herzegovina (a country with mine/ERW problem and a recipient country). Against this backdrop, a parallel workshop was held, which included representatives of the Croatian and Bosnian and Herzegovinian mine action systems, who presented their experience in preparation of key documents for mine action activities (national mine action strategy; law on mine action / humanitarian demining), as well as possibilities for cooperation between states and international mine action operators.

During plenary sessions, experts discussed the following topics: global mine action experiences (contamination with mines and ERW); application of new technologies in mine action; practical examples in victim assistance and mine risk education programs; realization of a mine free world by 2025; relation between terrorism and ERW; experiences and methods in countering the threat of IEDs; natural disasters / crisis situations and mine action (explosions of ammunition depots, forest fires, floods etc.).

As a practical part of the Symposium, participants attended a field demonstration that included the use of drone in general survey, the work of mine detection dogs, demonstration of the newest versions of mine detectors, the upgraded version of the dual-sensor ALIS, the device for protection in case of accidental detonations and mobile application for detecting hazardous areas.

On the margins of the 15<sup>th</sup> Symposium, the following events were also held: the traditional meeting of the South East Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC); the meeting of the Joint Secretary and partners in the project “Decontamination of war-affected territories along the border between Croatia and Hungary” (De-mine HU-HR II); the meeting of the project “Biological Methods (Bees) for Explosive Detection” which is financed by the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program with participation of the universities from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Kingdom.

Thank you.



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**ANNEX TO THE STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
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*Research and development*

- Throughout 2017 and 2018, the project entitled “Biological Methods (Bees) for Explosive Detection” financed by the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program, continued with its activities. The coordinator and initiator of the project is the Croatian Center for Testing, Development and Training Ltd. (CTDT) and partners in the project are the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences from the University of Zagreb, the University of Banja Luka from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the University St. Andrews from the United Kingdom. The project duration is three years and the goal is to develop innovative methods and technologies for landmine detection through the advancement and integration of current state-of-the-art techniques (honeybees) in combination with the explosive vapor sensors and advanced imaging techniques.
- Throughout 2017 and 2018, at the Croatian test site Benkovac, a research team from the University of Manchester conducted a series of trials of experimental detection equipment. The aim of the project is to help countering the problems of discrimination of targets in uncooperative (highly mineralized) soils and to research more advanced electromagnetic detectors. The lead partner in this project is the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing of the University of Zagreb in Croatia while the trials are financed by the UK-based charity “Find a Better Way” through projects PERUN and METASHAPE.

## *Training*

One of the main fields of expertise that Croatia can offer to interesting parties is training. Training courses are conducted in accordance with IMAS<sup>1</sup> and Testing and Evaluation Protocols.

- In October 2017 and again in October 2018 the CTDT Ltd. conducted trainings for employees of the Russian company *Emercom Demining* on the subject of mine clearance management whose employees gained qualifications for project managers, site managers, group leaders and internal control inspectors. Trainings involved more than 30 participants in total.

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<sup>1</sup> International Mine Action Standards.