

International Campaign to Ban Landmines
Statement on Cooperation and Assistance
Ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
Geneva, Switzerland
Delivered by Anthony Forrest, ICBL Landmine Monitor
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Mr. President:

It is difficult to categorize 2007 as a positive or negative year for mine action cooperation and assistance. The evidence, frankly, is conflicting, and is subject to a variety of interpretations. During the past year, however, several important issues have emerged.

By one of the most basic measures – the global value of international mine action funding – mine action assistance has suffered a steep decline. At the Eighth Meeting of States Parties, the ICBL was pleased to report \$475 million in international funding for 2006, the greatest amount reported since 1992. Of this total, Lebanon received \$69 million, much of it dedicated to emergency clearance following the July-August 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. In 2007, international funding totalled \$430.6 million – an annual decline of roughly \$45 million, or 10 percent. As the scale of clearance operations lessened in Lebanon in 2007, its share of international funding fell to \$27 million, a drop of approximately \$42 million, which is roughly equal to the overall decline in international funding. Funding levels in 2007 surpassed any year other than 2006, exceeding 2005, the next highest year, by about \$56 million.

Perhaps, then, 2006 funding levels were an anomaly prompted by emergency appeals, and there remains a general but less pronounced trend towards increased annual funding. As the ICBL stated at the 8th MSP, however, by responding so effectively to emergency appeals for Lebanon, donor states set a new real standard of \$475 million against which future mine action funding levels must be judged. Mine/ERW contamination anywhere is a serious concern, requiring a sustained response from both mine/ERW-affected states and donor states. States must ensure that funding levels are maintained according to real requirements, and that funds are redirected from one emergency to another to guarantee stable progress towards implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty on a global scale. This must include, significantly, the transition of mine/ERW-affected states from recipient to donor states – through allocation of funds, technical expertise, or other forms of assistance – once they have fulfilled their own treaty obligations.

While overall international funding declined in 2007 compared to 2006, nine of the top twenty donor states contributed more in US dollar terms in 2007 than they did the previous year. Notable among these were New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Belgium, Ireland, and Norway, each of which increased its funding by more than 30 percent. Five donor states—Belgium, Canada,

Ireland, Norway, and Spain—provided more mine action funding in 2007 than they had in any previous year. Landmine Monitor found that the five largest international donors in 2007 were the United States, Norway, Canada, the European Commission and Japan. The EC and EU member states contributed a combined total of approximately \$197 million. Significant declines in annual funding were reported by the EC, Slovakia, the United States, France and Italy, each of which reported a reduction of more than 30 percent compared to funds contributed in 2006.

Reported funding by mine/ERW-affected states to their mine action programs, as either monetary or in-kind contributions, increased to \$117.4 million in 2007 from approximately \$84 million in 2006. The mine/ERW-affected states reporting the largest national contributions in 2007, in monetary or in-kind terms, were Croatia, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sudan and Lebanon.

A large part of the apparent overall increase in national funding is accounted for by more detailed financial reporting on the part of mine/ERW-affected states. On the whole, reporting of national funding remains incomplete, inconsistent, and impossible to compare or assess on a global scale. However, the template for Article 5 deadline extension requests, with its focus on resources made available by mine/ERW-affected states to their own clearance efforts, as well as projected annual clearance costs and sources of funding, resulted in some of the most detailed reporting in recent years by mine/ERW-affected states of current and future costs, national budgets and required international assistance for mine clearance. Serious consideration should be given to adopting a similar format for regular reporting by mine/ERW-affected states on all areas of treaty implementation, in order to make reporting of national funding more consistent and accurate; to more precisely judge appeals for international assistance against detailed, comprehensive cost estimates and national funding strategies; and to more accurately assess and report funding strategies and commitments at the national level.

The five largest recipients of mine action funding in 2007 were Afghanistan, Iraq, Cambodia, Sudan and Lebanon. Increases of at least \$5 million were seen in 2007 in Senegal, Belarus, and Jordan, while reductions of at least \$2 million occurred in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Mozambique, Yemen, Vietnam, Angola and Lebanon. Funding appeared to be stable in 2007 to the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, and Europe and Central Asia. Funding declined notably – by more than \$20 million in each case – to Africa and the Middle East.

It is not possible at this point to calculate the near- or long-term global costs associated with implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty, because there remains a lack of fundamental data on contamination and casualties for some mine/ERW-affected states; but also because, as we have already noted, even where this data is available, comprehensive cost estimates and budgets are in many cases incomplete or lacking in necessary detail. The Article 5 extension process has, however, provided at least some evidence of the projected costs for mine/ERW clearance in a

small number of mine/ERW-affected states, and allows us to compare these costs to actual funding levels.

Among the fifteen states submitting requests for extensions to their Article 5 deadlines as of September 2008, eleven have expressed the need for international assistance. The total projected cost for these eleven extension requests is approximately \$2.3 billion. Of this total, Croatia's cost estimate accounts for approximately \$937 million, Thailand's estimate accounts for \$575 million, and BiH's estimate accounts for \$550 million. Given the uncertainty regarding the actual extent of contamination in these and certain other states requesting an extension, these amounts must be considered highly speculative. Clearly, however, the Article 5 extension process is going to impose a considerable strain on overall mine action funding; strain which will only increase as additional states miss their Article 5 deadlines and seek financial assistance within new extension requests.

Approval by States Parties of an Article 5 extension request implies approval of its corresponding financial plans and targets. The review process must look closely and critically at these plans and targets. Mine/ERW-affected states must justify in detail their reported costs, budgets and sources of funding. States must deal with financial issues and concerns early in the process. The costs and associated demands of Article 5 implementation will increase annually, especially if shortfalls in funding result in clearance delays and a late rush to complete clearance ahead of the extended deadlines.

Impending shortfalls for mine clearance do not begin to take into account the continued lack of funds for risk education and victim assistance, both of which remain, according to our findings, chronically underfunded at the national and international levels. Funding for risk education and victim assistance must become a priority alongside fulfilment of Article 5 obligations, to ensure that competition for funds does not drain money from critical RE and VA programming.

There were positive developments for mine action assistance in 2007, as highlighted here. International funding remained well above \$400 million. Nine major donors increased their funding levels, and five achieved record annual funding amounts. Mine/ERW-affected states reported higher levels of funding than ever before. If we take the most cautious and critical view of circumstances in 2007, however, we can see many serious issues for concern and response by States Parties. International mine action funding declined by 10 percent compared to the previous year. Eleven major donors reduced their levels of funding. Analysis and reporting of mine action costs and funding requirements remain inadequate. Funds remain particularly scarce for risk education and victim assistance.

In order to respond to these significant challenges, we believe that mine/ERW-affected and donor states must place greater emphasis on more detailed, comprehensive and time-specific

reporting of cost estimates and funding requirements for all areas of mine action – including, if necessary, new standard methods for measuring and reporting financial data – and on joint planning and coordination of assistance strategies and allocations of funds. States must ensure that the real costs of treaty implementation are accurately identified and fully covered, and that treaty fulfilment is not jeopardized by states developing assistance priorities and targets in isolation.

Thank you.