



**STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES OF THE CONVENTION ON
THE PROHIBITION OF USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-
PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 8-9 JUNE, 2017

ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (8 JUNE, 2017.) 10:00-13:00h

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The current size of the suspect area in Bosnia in Herzegovina is 1.091 km² or 2,2% of total Bosnia and Herzegovina area. There still remain more than 80.000 pieces of mines/ERW in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mine problem is present in 129 municipalities/cities, i.e. 1398 contaminated communities/populated areas. Mine and ERW contamination directly influences the safety of approximately 545.000 persons, or 15% out of total number of Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens, as per the last census from 2013.

In the post-war period, 1.754 persons were hit by mines/ERW while 613 out of the total number were killed. Out of the total number of persons hit, 184 or 10% of victims were women, while 249 or 14% were children. During humanitarian demining procedures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 127 deminers were hit while 51 deminers were killed. In 2017, 3 persons were hit while 1 person got killed.

Since the beginning of mine action conduct in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996, and concluding with the year of 2016, there are 3.109 km² of suspect hazardous area released to the users which is 75% out of initial estimated suspect hazardous area. In clearance operations, there have been 62.756 AP mines, 8.444 AT mines and 56.129 pieces of ERW found and destroyed.

It has been predicted by the Strategy on Mine Action in Bosnia and Herzegovina that fulfillment of obligations from the ratified abovementioned convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be completed by 2019. The realization of the Strategy in the period of 2009-2016, as for the domain from Article 5 of the convention (clearance of all known minefields and release of the suspect hazardous areas) is approximately at 50%. Through operations of non-technical and technical survey and mine clearance, 603km² of suspect hazardous area have been released from 2009 to 2016. It is evident from the stated above that Article 5 of the said convention will not be completed within the given time. The reason for delays in fulfilling of the obligations can be traced to the financial issues and lack of funds. In the period from 2006-2016, only 50% percent

of planned funds were available, which is 334.4 mil. BAM. The local and donor sources ensured the funds as planned (ratio 51-49%), while Bosnia and Herzegovina unfortunately did not provide additional funds due to unfortunate economic situation in the country. Average exploitation of resources accredited to humanitarian demining was merely 30%.

Within the process of the second revision of the Strategy in Mine Action in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2015, and in accordance with the estimation of available financial funds for the period of 2016-2018, it is planned that 1/3 of the suspect hazardous area registered at the beginning of 2016 will be released, and it is necessary to ensure 57.7 mil. BAM annually.

In order to speed up the process and fulfill the international obligations in accordance with the Article 5 of the subject convention, the Mine Action Centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHMAC) has developed the expert regulations for the inclusion of the “Land Release” concept, and in accordance with IMAS. Results gained so far through the realization of these projects in the period of 2014-2016 allow for optimism that the application of this concept in the next period will greatly speed up the process of releasing the suspect hazardous areas, which will become more cost effective and cheaper. Non-technical and technical survey and mine clearance operations were completed at total 6 suspect hazardous areas. Through technical survey, 2 km² of area has been reduced; 0,4 km² was cleared through clearance operations, with found and destroyed 215 mines and 844 pieces of ERW, through technical survey, the area of 22,3 km² has been cancelled. After the process of verification, 24,7 km² of area has been released to final users. The facts stated above show that less than 10% of the area has been treated with technical methods.

In 2017 and for the same aim, the Mine Action Centre in Bosnia and Herzegovina formed 4 expert groups to work on the amendments and additions to all the chapters of B&H Standard and SOP for humanitarian demining in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with IMAS and lessons learned. Activities are conducted continuously, and their completion is expected by the end of September 2017. After that, the updated regulations will be sent to the Demining Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina for adoption.

Apart from the stated above, a series of activities has started in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016, on creation of the Regulations on amendments and additions of the Demining Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the working group appointed by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of representatives from Ministry of Civil Affairs, Demining Commission, Mine Action Centre, Armed Forces and entity Civil protections. The working group created the first draft of this law and Ministry of Civil Affairs opened the process of public consultations in accordance with the Rules for consultations in creation of regulations within institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The public consultations process is completed. The Working Group has completed work as the draft law is through the Ministry of Civil Affairs forwarded to the Council of Ministers for adoption.

Also in November 2016, Mine Action Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina started the process of creation of its Exit Strategy of Mine Action in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2019-2025, together with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). The BHMIC and the GICHD will organize a meeting at the margins of this intersessional meeting in order to define the final steps towards the stated exit strategic plan. After the completion of the process as a whole (this October), Exit Strategy of Mine Action 2019-2025 will be referred to the Council of Ministers of B&H for adoption.

All previously stated activities present the preparatory actions with the aim of submitting the request by Bosnia and Herzegovina for the extension of the deadline as per Article 5 of the subject convention. At the margins of the 20th international meeting of the directors of mine action and UN advisors, held in Geneva from 06-10.02.2017, Mine Action Centre in B&H and Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit held a meeting, where BHMIC announced the request for deadline extension by March 1, 2018. Activities per this issue will intensify from September 2017. At this point, we can say that the extension request will coincide with the Exit Strategy for Mine Action in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019-2025, and it will be in accordance with Maputo Declaration + 15, adopted in 2014.

Thank you for your attention.