

Dear Mr. Chair, Dear Colleagues,

First of all, using the opportunity, I would like to thank ISU and GICHD for organizing these events. This is a great moment to update you on mine action related activities in Tajikistan.

The situation with Mine/UXO threat in Tajikistan remains unchanged. The level of mine contamination area in Tajikistan is relatively high, mainly in Tajik-Afghan Border. Landmines and explosive remnants of war including cluster munition remnants are still affecting the lives of the people of Tajikistan. Unfortunately, as of May 2017, *two mine accidents occurred* where *three people* got various injuries *out of which two were children*. Since 1992, *867 people* were involved in mine/ERW accidents out of which *492 injuries and 375 deaths*. Mines and ERW continue to create problems both in social and economic aspects.

With the support of Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, GICHD and UNDP, TNMAC completed the following legislation and strategic documents:

- The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Humanitarian Mine Action was endorsed by the Parliament and Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
- After consideration and agreement with all relevant ministries and entities the National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on humanitarian Mine Action for 2017-2020 and National Mine Action Standards were endorsed by the Government of Tajikistan by first quarter 2017.
- Based on the support and security permission of the Government of Tajikistan, TNMAC was able to deploy the full demining and survey capacity to conduct land release operations along the Tajik-Afghan border.

The current land release capacity in Tajikistan for 2017 consist of 12 manual demining and 2 NTS teams;

All of the above mentioned teams are already deployed to conduct land release operations along Tajik-Afghan border.

In 2016, totally 1.44 km² of the land were released through mine clearance and technical survey operations. During Land release operations there were found and destroyed 1,303 AP mines, 1,885 ERW, 1 kg explosive charges and 51,815 small arms cartridges. 13 areas completed and prepared for handover.

As of May 2017, the total area of 100 000 m² of the land were released through mine clearance and technical survey operations. As a result, 531 AP mines, 23 ERW, were identified and destroyed.

However, despite the achievements the programme faces the following challenges:

Weather: The winter was very harsh this year (2017), due to snow and extended winter season we were not able to deploy timely (in February/March) the land release capacity.

Inaccessible areas: Hazardous areas that impossible to access by land release teams due to relief, small river islands, mudflows and other natural disasters.

Non-executable tasked areas: A confirmed hazardous area in which clearance is impossible to execute under current working conditions due to sandy soil, depth of items (60-70 cm), waterlogged ground, etc. These areas are identified during non-technical survey activities or during execution of technical survey and clearance operations.

Unsurveyed minefield records: As of May 2017 58 unsurveyed minefield records (MFRs) remain to be surveyed in Tajikistan which has already started from May 2017. A serious challenge faced during last NTS is that in some cases due to lack of access (no access road, one mined area is blocking access to others).

Reliability of surveyed Minefield Records: Most minefield records are of good quality and contain necessary information, however, some minefield records do not reflect the reality in the ground for example certain mines dropped by helicopter etc. The information from such records has to be verified and validated during the NTS and data analyses.

Only manual demining operations: All areas accessible for MDDs and machines almost completed and only manual demining operations conducted the speed of which is slow and productivity is less.

Remaining contamination

As of May 2017 about 9.3 km² of land (144 confirmed hazard areas covering 7.7 km² of land and 58 unsurveyed minefield records covering approximately 1.7 km² (based on desk analysis) still remains mine contaminated.

In addition to this there are 9 Battle areas which covering 1.1 km²

Support required:

GICHD support will be required in upgrading the prioritization system and uphold land release efficiency and information management for TMAP

There is a need to increase the demining capacity in Tajikistan in order to ensure timely implementation of Ottawa convention obligations by 2020. Of course this will require additional resources.

We need also advisory support and exchange experience on addressing inaccessible areas and non-executable tasks as well as on all other challenges faced.

On behalf of the Republic of Tajikistan, I would like to thank UNDP, GICHD, ISU and all our donors US DoS, Norway, Switzerland, Japan for their great contribution to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme. Also we present our highest gratitude and appreciation to the international agencies (NPA and FSD) that have been involved in implementation of mine action program in Tajikistan.

Thank you for your attention!

