



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN Directorate of Mine Action Coordination Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority

**Afghanistan's Statement on Clearance (Article five APMBC)
APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 7 – 8 June 2018**

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Afghan delegation, I am pleased to present the achievements and the challenges of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in fulfilling its commitments under the Article Five of the Convention.

We are working with our partners in the humanitarian mine clearance community to come up with ways to clear abandoned new mines under the rubric of the MAPA, and thus in the best tradition of the impartial and neutral approach that the MAPA is known for throughout Afghanistan. All Afghans appreciate the noble struggle of the Afghan deminers; I wish to pay tribute to them here. I would also note that non-abandoned explosive devices, including some landmines, are separately addresses by our armed forces.

Afghanistan remains one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world. 3,168 minefields, covering 514 square kilometers which is accounted for 24 percent from all, remain contaminated and continue to affect 1,536 communities, 256 districts, in all but one of the 34 provinces of the Afghanistan.

The remaining recorded contamination presents a significant challenge and not only causes people to lose their lives and limbs, but also impedes development by delaying new road networks, transmission lines, mineral mines and IDP and returnee settlements.

In addition, the extent of new and unrecorded contamination from the current conflicts is also not fully determined. A very preliminary survey that have been carried out in early 2017 in 17 out of 34 province, it identified over 400 sq km to be contaminated by Improvised Mines and ERW, legacy of the ongoing conflicts. This having been said, we know that on average some 171 Afghan civilians lost their lives or injured by landmines, ERW and Improvised Mines every month, during 2017. This is perhaps the highest casualty rate in the world this year. Given the increasing civilian casualties, humanitarian mine action needs in the country are as great now as they were when we joined the Ottawa Convention in 2003.

Afghanistan has a detailed work plan to achieve mine-free status by 2023. We are now in the sixth year of the Extension Work Plan. Although we achieved the clearance target for the first year, 2013, achievements respectively were only 70% of the target for year two, 65 % for year three, 54% of the target for year 4 and 31% achieved during fifth year. As it seen, the clearance progress compared to the target went down every year since the submission of the 10 years operational plan because we had to add the remaining uncleared area from every previous year to the subsequent year.

Looking at the targets achieved over the last few years, it is clear that we will not

be able to meet the annual target for 2018. The reason for this is mainly due to lack of sufficient funds and inserting newly recorded hazards left mostly from the legacy contamination during ongoing nationwide survey. The Programme structure and its specialized and professional capacity are all in place enabling us to deliver on our planned targets, although, as I mentioned, new challenges are also emerging, which add to our humanitarian clearance burden.

To give you an example, MAPA's funding target for 2018 is USD 99 million, of which USD 47 million has so far been secured. This is approximately 47% of our funding target for 2018.

Today, MAPA is not just highly effective, it is also cost-efficient, delivering positive value for money in what is recognized as one the most difficult operating environments in the world.

The MAPA systematically seeks to identify and deliver innovative Mine Risk Education to the communities who live in the impacted areas. This will include provision of MRE through radio/TV spots. In 2017 a risk education workshop brought together the MAPA implementing partners and stakeholders to review the existing process of mine risk education, its methodology and materials. The risk education workshop aimed to find ways of providing tailored risk education to the affected communities based on emerging local needs, evolving conflict dynamics and thus the changing patterns of risks.

Finally, on behalf of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, we gratefully acknowledge the financial contributions of all donors and the technical support of the UNMAS.

Thank you all for your attention.

Today, MAPA is not just highly effective, it is also cost-efficient, delivering positive value for money in what is recognised as one of the most difficult operating environments in the world.

The MAPA systematically seeks to identify and deliver innovative Mine Risk Education to the communities who live in the impacted areas. This includes provision of MRE through radio/TV spots. In 2017 a risk education workshop brought together the MAPA implementing partners and stakeholders to review the existing process of mine risk education, its methodology and materials. The risk education workshop aimed to find ways of providing tailored risk education to the affected communities based on emerging local needs, evolving conflict dynamics and thus the changing patterns of risks.

Finally, on behalf of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, we gratefully acknowledge the financial contributions of all donors and the technical support of the UNMAS.

Thank you all for your attention.