



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

(30 June to 2 July 2020)

Mr. President,

The members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)¹ applaud you for your leadership in convening the Intersessional Meetings under these unusual and difficult circumstances. Given this year's significance in establishing a baseline for the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan adopted at the Fourth Review Conference, we believe it is essential that Convention meetings take place in the most inclusive way possible, allowing space for States Parties, but also for civil society and other observers to participate meaningfully.

Excellencies,

In the Oslo Action Plan, States Parties renewed their commitment to the full implementation of their obligations under the Convention. In this respect, the United Nations congratulates Chile on having cleared all known mine contamination. We are also encouraged to hear that mine clearance activities are resuming in some States Parties, with additional precautionary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 having been put in place. We are equally inspired by how quickly States Parties adapted their risk education activities, be they by scaling up already existent delivery through television, radio broadcasts, billboards or the internet or through the development of entirely new activities. This goes to show the willingness and ability

¹ The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.



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of States Parties and the sector at large to rise to challenges and adapt their operating procedures. The discussions reflected a welcome emphasis on inclusion of persons with disabilities in risk education and other mine action programming – though they also highlighted the many challenges that still need to be overcome in this respect.

The thematic sessions at this year's intersessional meetings cover important and timely issues. In the Oslo Action Plan, States Parties have committed to strong actions on the consideration of gender and diversity in the implementation of the Convention and we invite States to consult the United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, which illustrate how gender considerations can be included in different stages of mine action programming, in implementing these actions. Moreover, discussions on the role that mine action can play in strengthening the agency of women in stabilization and peacebuilding settings were of particular note as we approach the 20th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, on women, peace and security.

Anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature continue to be used by non-State actors in various contexts and it is concerning that the list of States Parties having to face this challenge is growing, rather than decreasing. In some States in which the United Nations is active, mines of an improvised nature together with explosive remnants of war account for almost all recorded casualties. Affected States therefore need to tackle this issue with urgency, as they committed to do in the Oslo Action Plan, through enhanced cooperation and scaled up programming.

Additionally, in view of the scale and potential longevity of the ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic for international funding for mine action activities, effective cooperation between donor and affected States and coordination of funding will be crucial for the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan. The IACG-MA delivered this message with one voice



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through its [joint statement in May 2020](#). The United Nations engages with partners in various fora, for example the Mine Action Support Group or the Mine Action Area of Responsibility of the Global Protection Cluster to foster a collaborative and coordinated approach to mine action support to affected countries.

Excellencies,

There can be no doubt that the world is going through trying times. However, seeking to fulfil the obligations under the Convention to reach our common goal of a world free of mines cannot wait. Civilians living under the threat of mines, including refugees and internally displaced persons eager to return to their homes, or those who may need to move or flee, cannot wait until the pandemic is over. Mine victims cannot wait for services on which their lives or well-being depend on for the pandemic to end. We appeal to States in the position to provide assistance to continue to do so. Your continued attention to the Convention's implementation is as needed as ever.

Thank you.