

Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Geneva, 18-19 May 2016

Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance

Statement by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

Cooperation and assistance, exchange of expertise and experience, information sharing is instrumental in order to progress towards completion.

A number of platform and fora do exist at the international level to stimulate cooperation and assistance and to foster information sharing. This very meeting is one example of the space provided or available for interaction.

What is equally important is to ensure appropriate platforms and fora at national level. Coordination among all mine action actors involved in a given country and regular exchange between national authorities, local actors, international agencies, NGOs, and donors is a must if we want to achieve completion.

As an example, let me draw on the recent workshop on mine action coordination in Afghanistan held in Tajikistan last month.

The objective of the workshop was to bring together mine action stakeholders involved in Afghanistan to discuss the current strategy, priorities and challenges of the mine action programme and to get familiar with projects, targets, thematic areas of operation and funding gaps of the implementing partners in Afghanistan.

During the workshop, 15 implementing partners presented their projects that could provide a quick impact at a low cost. These included projects on advocacy and support to victims, risk education and land release. The workshop generated a strong interest from senior government officials from Afghanistan and H.E. Ashraf Ghani; the President of Afghanistan lent his support to it. This is a clear signal of the firm political commitment of Afghan authorities.

Afghanistan has recently developed a Mine Action Strategic Plan that is seen as a remarkable achievement by the mine action stakeholders. The government is also taking steps to include mine action in the government's budget and is committed to respect its deadline for completion.

We need more of these national coordination meetings. National authorities, operators and donors need to coordinate their activities, align their targets and agree on priorities under the leadership of the affected States.

Thank you.