

## **OTTAWA INTERSESSIONAL MEETING, 19 – 20 MAY 2016**

### **UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE**

Thank you Mr Chair

The UK is fully committed to improving the quality of life for people affected by anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). The UK believes that needs are best met through the development of strong, accessible health systems and through support to people with disabilities. We committed to do this in the Cartagena Action Plan, and have maintained this support through the Maputo Action Plan. Health sector development remains the largest component of all basic services supported by UK aid.

In particular, the United Kingdom tackles the humanitarian threat posed by anti-personnel mines by surveying for, and clearing, all explosive remnants of war; delivering risk education; supporting the development of strong, accessible health systems; and building national governments' capacity to manage their own ordnance clearance activities.

The United Kingdom attaches a great deal of importance to gender-awareness in its mine action and explosive remnants of war programmes. To ensure our programmes benefit women, girls, men and boys we collect disaggregated data and use this to develop further our project design.

The United Kingdom does not discriminate against, or among, persons with disabilities, whether they be victims of anti-personnel mines, or any other explosive remnant of war, victims of armed conflict generally, or disabled through illness, accident or other causes. Support should be non-discriminatory and should aim to improve capacity in a sustainable manner. This includes ensuring that development

programmes adequately include disabled people throughout their design, delivery and monitoring.

The UK's Mine Action efforts have been a central component of its broader commitment to maintain the target of spending 0.7% of gross national income on Official Development Assistance (ODA). In 2015 alone, UK mine action work in developing countries totalled over £10m. This resulted in the removal of over 22,000 landmines and ERW; and released over 37m square meters of land which resulted in people having better access to basic services, increased economic opportunities and improved safety. The UK's projects have also reached more than 116,000 people through mine risk education activities. The UK also worked in Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Iraq and the Ukraine to strengthen the ability of national authorities to manage their own landmine and ERW programmes.

Mr Chair,

For many years, the United Kingdom has funded mine action programmes worldwide, especially in those areas still suffering from the effects of armed conflict. This goes to the heart of what our Convention is all about – tackling the suffering and casualties caused by mines, so that civilians can live their lives free of fear and risk.

Thank you.