

- Thank you, Misters Co-Chairs for the opportunity to deliver an update on the issues being addressed the Contact Group on Linking Mine Action & Development.
  
- As you know, the Contact Group on Linking Mine Action & Development was established in May 2006, as a follow-up to three dialogues on linking mine action and development held in the margins of the Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings of the Ottawa Convention.
  
- The Contact Group met for the first time in the margins of the Seventh Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, in the fall of 2006.
  
- The purpose of the Contact Group on Linking Mine Action & Development is two-fold: 1- to support the States Parties to the Convention in the achievement of the ten actions identified under the Nairobi Action Plan for 2005-2009 that focus on linking mine action and development; and 2- to support the inclusion of mine action and development in the 2007-08 work programme of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC).
  
- Today's meeting was coordinated by Canada and Cambodia.
  
- The Contact Group engaged in the following developments:
  - 1- A Concept Note on the role of the Contact Group was presented.
  - 2- Participants were briefed on the progress of the dedicated project on Linking Mine Action and Development being implemented by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. This project has received support from Sweden, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Canada.
  - 3- As part of this dedicated project, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining held a two-day Mine Action Practitioners' Meeting this week in Geneva, and reported back on the salient points raised by mine action and development practitioners.

Notably, from these practitioners, we heard concrete examples of how integrated approaches to mine action have brought developmental results at community, national and regional levels in mine-affected countries in need of assistance.

That said, a message was delivered by mine action practitioners in attendance for the attention of development actors and governments, whereby these were encouraged to act on linking mine action and development. Donors for their part were encouraged to integrate mine action into broader cooperation assistance programming, such as Health, Environment, Economic Development, and Peace Building to provide for sustainability, coherence, and maximisation of the efforts being made by the variety of actors involved in mine action.

- 4- We also heard back from the UNDP on the discussions that took place during the March 2007 Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and UN Advisors.
  - 5- To link the work that we are doing under the Convention and that of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, an update of latest developments to draw up guidelines on integrating mine action into development programming.
  - 6- Finally, next steps were discussed for the Contact Group.
- Thank you again Ministers Co-Chairs for the opportunity to speak to issues being raised by the Contact Group on Linking Mine Action & Development.