



Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer  
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

## INTERSESSIONAL PROGRAMME 2002-2003

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### STANDING COMMITTEE ON MINE CLEARANCE, MINE RISK EDUCATION AND MINE ACTION TECHNOLOGIES

#### Report of the 5 February 2003 Meeting

#### I. Introduction

Pursuant to the decisions of the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention (4MSP), the meeting of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Mine Action Technologies was convened by its Co-Chairs, Ambassador Jean Lint of Belgium and Mr. Michael Oyugi of Kenya, with support of their Co-Rapporteurs, Ambassador Sam Sotha of Cambodia and Col. Toru Takahashi of Japan. The meeting was held in Geneva with the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The meeting intended:

- to provide an update on the status of the implementation of elements of the Convention relevant to this Standing Committee;
- to provide an opportunity for mine affected States Parties and donors to present their specific situations and needs regarding mine clearance, hence increasing mutual understanding;
- to provide an opportunity for updates regarding assistance and co-operation;
- to present an in-depth country study of Cambodia in order to share lessons that may be relevant to other countries;
- to provide updates on various tools to assist mine action efforts, including updates on developments in mine action technologies.

#### II. Overview of the Status of Implementation

The Co-Chairs highlighted that, to date, a total of 36 States Parties have reported mined areas, that 10 States Parties that have not yet provided Article 7 Reports are likely to be mine affected, that out of these 46 mine-affected States Parties, Costa Rica is the first to have indicated that it is mine-free in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, and that 25 of the remaining 45 mine-affected States Parties have a deadline in 2009 for mine-clearance.

Ms. Sara Sekkenes of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines' (ICBL) Mine Action Working Group made a presentation which highlighted a lack of sufficient and adequate reporting, and the need for standardisation and transparency in reporting. In response to this, the ICBL stated that a standardised reporting template, developed by UNMAS in collaboration with GICHD and with input of major mine action NGOs, will soon be ready. It was also noted that efforts be made to address any confusion regarding how and when to report on matters related to Article 5 obligations. Ms. Sekkenes provided an overview of the template and encouraged States Parties to use this method to support Article 7 reporting.

The UNDP reported on the status of UN mine clearance efforts, with key achievements to date including: the drafting of guidelines on transition strategies; completion of a study on the socio-economic impact of landmines; mine action training; commencement of the 2002 Mine Action Exchange Programme; completion of a study on national mine action legislation; final preparations to hand over the Croatian Mine Action Programme to Croatian authorities; and, assessment and monitoring programmes. The UNDP noted that its main challenges in the near future are: resource mobilisation; the integration of mine action into development agendas; long term strategic planning; emergency response; and, further strengthening national mine action centres.

### **III. Update on Implementation Plans and Progress**

The Co-Chairs provided an opportunity for updates on implementation plans and progress by those States Parties that have reported mined areas. Seventeen States Parties took advantage of this opportunity, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina, Honduras, Malawi, Thailand, Mozambique, Albania, Zambia, Chad, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Niger, Peru, Tunisia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Ecuador and Jordan. Angola also used this opportunity to report on victim assistance.

Most of these States Parties noted that they would complete implementation on or prior to deadlines indicated in Article 5 of the Convention. Others noted that they faced challenges with regard to assistance, and the importance of continued assistance from donor countries was stressed.

In addition to updates provided by these States Parties, Ethiopia provided an update on mine clearance efforts and Libya expressed concerns regarding security and responsibility with regard to the Convention.

(Note: At the next meeting of the Standing Committee, the Co-Chairs intend to provide a detailed summary of the important information shared by the mine affected States Parties.)

### **IV. Achievements and Lessons Learned: Case Study of Cambodia**

Ambassador Sam Sotha of Cambodia made a detailed presentation on Cambodia's efforts in the area of demining, indicating challenges and difficulties faced, and outlining new initiatives, strategies and activities which have been undertaken or are planned in order to deal with such difficulties. These initiatives include the establishment of the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA), the conducting of a national symposium, and the drafting of a national mine action strategy, which will soon to be approved. It was reported that Cambodia will host a Regional Seminar, "Building a Cooperative Future for Mine Action in Cambodia", from 26 to 28 March.

Mr. Stan Brabant of Handicap International made a presentation on lessons which can be drawn from village demining in Cambodia, based on the book by Ruth Bottomley, outlining concerns related to the link between mine risk education and needs of mine-affected communities. The need for greater involvement of communities and a focus on risk, achieved through the utilisation of humanitarian resources, was stressed.

## **V. Update on Assistance and Cooperation**

The Co-Chairs provided an opportunity for States Parties as well as other organisations to provide an update on their assistance and cooperation to mine affected States Parties. Statements on new initiatives and funding assistance were made by several States Parties.

France outlined the demining and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) missions which have been undertaken and are planned, both on a national and international level. Italy, Japan and New Zealand shared information on their commitments to assist mine affected countries.

In addition to reports by these States Parties, several non-governmental, international and other organisations highlighted initiatives, programmes, and constructive ways in which they are providing cooperation and assistance to States Parties.

UNICEF stressed the importance of integration and inter-agency co-operation, also pointing out the need for a humanitarian and demining hybrid of mine risk education and survey and surveillance activities.

Landmine Action UK highlighted that the Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative is the only completely indigenous mine action programme in Sudan that crosses lines of conflict and hence covers the entire country. It also stressed the ongoing necessity for funding, equipment and capacity building.

The GICHD provided an overview of its current and future work, which includes the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) support to 28 field programmes world wide; the completion of IMSMA Version 3; preparing International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) under a mandate from UNMAS; and, undertaking research and producing publications in several areas, including on mine detection dogs and mechanical demining equipment. The GICHD also reported that its Foundation Council had adopted a new strategy for 2003-2003, highlighting that its work is undertaken in three areas (operational assistance, research to make mine action safer and more effective, and support to the Convention) and that the GICHD is involved in all aspects of mine action, extensively cooperating with states and other organizations.

Mr. Martin Barber of UNMAS reported on the new release of the IMSMA, mentioning that its development has been endorsed by the General Assembly and that it is currently being integrated by the GICHD. It is hoped that this initiative will aid in the preparation of Article 7 reports as well as funding decisions by donor countries.

The James Madison University Mine Action Information Centre (MAIC) presented its website, which includes: a global mine action registry; its Journal of Mine Action; and, a lessons learned database. Anyone directly related to mine action was encouraged to update this site regularly in order to provide current information.

## **VI. Update on Mine Action Technologies**

Professor Acheroy of Belgium provided a general overview of the status of developments in the area of mine action technologies. He noted that due to the lack of international co-ordination and co-operation, international standards, and inadequate dialogue, the International Test and Evaluation Programme (ITEP) was created to develop standards, and

has elaborated a work plan of testing and evaluation. Examples of enhanced or new technologies, such as metal detectors, the handheld dual sensor mine detector, the IMSMA, personal protective equipment, prosthetic feet, and educated rodents, were outlined.

## **VII. An Assessment of Needs that Remain**

The Co-Chairs concluded the meeting by suggesting the following tasks:

- that additional mine affected States Parties consider sharing with the Standing Committee in May updates on problems, plans, progress and priorities for assistance.
- that those in a position to provide assistance respond to requests made and provide updates in May;
- that Cambodia provide the May meeting with an update on the regional conference to be held in March; and
- that efforts in the area of mine action technologies are continued, and that these efforts are reported in May.

Co-Chairs

Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Mine Action Technologies