

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL STATUS AND OPERATION OF THE
CONVENTION, GENEVA, 3 FEBRUARY 2003**

**UN Intervention on the President's Action Programme
Presented By Martin Barber, Director, United Nations Mine Action Service**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It gives me great pleasure to address the Standing Committee on behalf of the United Nations system. All interventions of UN colleagues this week will be on behalf of the UN family as a whole. This intervention will focus on the President's Action Programme, showing the extent to which the guidelines have been taken on board by the UN family.
- The President has already mentioned the deadline for having completed the destruction of stockpiled antipersonnel mines in accordance with Article 4. With the assistance of Canada, we have developed a tool to help the international community obtain better information on this issue; the stockpile destruction part of the E-MINE, the electronic mine information network, has been revitalised. In this new part of the website, accessible at www.mineaction.org, information on and links to projects, investments and the status of national destruction programmes can be accessed. A full demonstration will be given of this new tool during the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction. My colleague Sayed Aqa of UNDP will say more about the UN's support for stockpile destruction on Thursday.
- Another important humanitarian from the Action Programme is the clearance of all mined areas within ten years. Mine-affected countries need assistance to meet this obligation. The United Nations is providing support to national mine action programmes in 35 countries/regions, helping Governments devise national strategies to become mine-free. Sayed Aqa will say more about this Wednesday. In response to the demand for more accurate information about the extent of the remaining problem, we have been working with the GICHD and NGO colleagues to develop a reporting template that is currently being integrated by the GICHD into the new version of IMSMA. This template will allow the international community to have access to information that is standardised and therefore easier to compare. We will say more about this Wednesday.
- Landmine Impact Surveys provide essential information for Governments to prioritise clearance work. LIS will be completed in 15 of the most mine-affected countries by the Review Conference in 2004.
- Long after mine clearance is over, there will be landmine survivors needing assistance. The President's Action Programme rightly mentions that the Convention's obligation to take into account the care, rehabilitation and socio-economic needs of mine victims is "*not expressed in a time limit in the Convention, but in the lifetime of victims.*" The international community is coming to realize the challenges linked to providing assistance to mine victims without making inappropriate distinctions between them and other disabled persons. The United Nations, for its part, has developed a victim assistance policy clarifying the role of UN agencies and mine action centres in this field.

- The United Nations continues to be active in promoting universalization of the Convention; my UNICEF colleague, Polly Brennan, will address this issue in a separate presentation later today.
- Finally, to meet all the challenges contained in the President's Action Programme, we will need to raise substantial funding. We welcome the initiative to give more focus to the question of resource mobilization during this week's work, and look forward to contributing to the discussions.
- Thank you Mr. Chairman.