



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

INTERSESSIONAL PROGRAMME 2001-2002

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
MINE CLEARANCE, MINE AWARENESS AND MINE ACTION TECHNOLOGIES**

**Meeting Report
May 28-29, 2002**

I. Introduction

Pursuant to the decisions of the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention (3MSP), the meeting of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Mine Action Technologies was convened by its Co-Chairs, Mr. Al Azi Mansour of Yemen and Mr. Erich Riedler of Germany, with support of their Co-Rapporteurs, Mr. Michael Oyugi of Kenya and Mr. Marc Acheroy of Belgium. The meeting was held in Geneva with the efficient support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The agenda was built upon the efforts undertaken by the Standing Committee at its January meeting. The meeting intended:

- (a) to focus on the status of the implementation of elements of the Convention relevant to this Standing Committee;
- (b) to present an in-depth country study of Mozambique in order to share lessons that may be relevant for applicability elsewhere;
- (c) to provide updates on various tools to assist mine action efforts, especially on progress in the field of detectors and mechanical equipment, in enhancing the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), and in the question of how the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) can assist mine-affected States Parties in completing Article 7 reports;
- (d) to provide opportunities for mine affected States Parties and donors to present their specific situations and needs thus increasing mutual understanding.

II. Overview of the Status of Implementation

Presentations were made by Ms. Anne Capelle of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and Mr. Stan Brabant of Handicap International (HI) Belgium. The main points made were the following:

1. It was proposed that there be a clearer understanding of mine affected states, based not only on the number of victims, but also on other factors, including: access to land and infrastructure; types of mines / UXO; and, other social and economical aspects.
2. It was noted that a lot of progress has been achieved: The quality of operations has increased, effective information management tools (e.g, the IMSMA) and the UN's International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) are available, and better detectors are coming soon on the market. But mine clearance is still a very slow and expensive process. Therefore, strategies and plans must be developed to prioritise the work in order to minimize the mine impact, which requires more data, information (through Art.7), and effective analysis tools.

3. It was suggested that three levels of decreasing priority be identified: regions of mine impact reduction (high level); mine impact free areas (medium level); and, mine free areas (low level). It was argued that high impact zones could be cleared in the 10-year timeframe of the Convention if a global strategy is defined by a so-called “stakeholder focus group”, including mine affected communities and countries, donors, international organizations and field operators. It was noted that States not Parties represent the most significant part of the impacted countries in the world.
4. It was reinforced that mine risk education is an integral part of mine action, because it saves lives, it helps to collect data for future surveys and clearance, and it mobilises public opinion in favour of the accession of the country to the Convention. It was noted that only three of the ten most affected countries are States Parties or Signatories.

III. Achievements and lessons learned: Mine Action in Mozambique

Presentations were made by: Mr. Arturo Verissimo, Director of the National Demining Institute (IND); Mr. Olaf Jürgensen, IND Chief Technical Advisor; Mr. Jackie D'Almeida, Director of the Accelerated Demining Programme (ADP); Mr. Laurence, HI Belgium; and, Ms. Judy Grayson, team leader of the UNDP mine action team. The main points made were the following:

1. It was stressed that, based, upon the Mozambican experience, mine action must be seen as part of a development oriented approach and the affected country itself must set the priorities of it. Mine action needs to be integrated into a national plan in the context of the fight against poverty and must involve the international mine action community. A mine action center (MAC) must be created as soon as possible within the context of peace building. A centralised impact survey at the country level is a prerequisite to obtaining a clear picture of the extent of the mines / UXO problem. A technical survey as the next step gives an overview of the real dimension of the problem and helps donors to plan their budgets for mine action. All activities must be conducted according to international standards (i.e., the IMAS) and Convention obligations.
2. It was reported that actions have been undertaken to place the Mozambican demining programme under national authority, to provide it with a national identity, and to make it simple, affordable and manageable. Therefore, national solutions have been developed everywhere, to increase co-ordination and control. The national capacity building programme has been created through management training, the development of national training capacity, of national co-operation capacity (South-South), and of national research capacity.
3. It was reported that a powerful mine risk education programme has been established in Mozambique. Effective and simple tools, like posters, mine committees, leaflets, songs, national radio programmes, comic books and school syllabi are used to disseminate information. The training of Red Cross agents and police personnel, up to the village level, proves to be very effective to collect data, to transfer information and to change dangerous behaviour (e.g. picking up UXO).

IV. Tools for Mine Action

1. Mr. Eriksson of the Joint Research Council and Mr. Mansour Al Azi, Director of Yemen's Mine Action Centre (JRC), highlighted how the cases of Kosovo and Yemen represented very good examples of how the IMSMA could be used both for managerial purposes and as data base. Mr. Alan Arnold of the GICHD illustrated how

the IMSMA can be an effective tool to support data collection and Convention reporting, according to Art. 5 Sec. 2 and Art. 7 Sec. 1 & 2 of the Convention.

2. Dr. Alois Sieber of the JRC highlighted that technology must be user-oriented, field driven and, even more importantly, affordable. In addition, he reported that in this context the International Test and Evaluation Programme (ITEP) has a very important role to play. Mr. Gülle of the ITEP noted that for the purpose of planning operations, and to increase effectiveness, actual maps may be the most important tool. If they are not available it must be guaranteed that spatial maps will be introduced.
3. Mr. Martin Barber, Chief of UNMAS, and Mr. Paddy Blagden, Technical Director of the GICHD, made presentations on the IMAS. It was indicated that the IMAS is a good example of effective collaboration between UNMAS and the GICHD. It was noted that the translation of the IMAS into numerous languages should be done on a needs-driven basis. It was reiterated that the IMAS provides common, agreed levels of performance in mine action, demonstrates agreement and consensus in the mine action community, facilitates the exchange of information and enhances cost effectiveness and safety. A total of 23 standards have been completed, new standards are being prepared, and an outreach programme has been established to discuss and explore the IMAS' practical application, to identify further changes that may be needed, to assist national mine action authorities to develop or amend their own national standards and standard operating procedures to reflect the IMAS, and to develop a broad political and technical consensus for the IMAS.

V. Update on implementation plans and progress, and on assistance and cooperation

1. The Co-Chairs provided an opportunity for updates on implementation plans and progress by those States Parties that have reported mined areas. Several States Parties and other States took advantage of this opportunity, including Albania, Argentina, Croatia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, Zambia, Afghanistan and Greece. The Co-Chairs also provided an opportunity for States Parties "in a position to do so" to provide updates on assistance and cooperation. Statements were made by a number of States, including by Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the European Commission.
2. The detailed agenda, the text of the presentations and the specific interventions can be found on the website of the GICHD at the following address: http://www.gichd.ch/mbc/all_meetings/SC_may02/speeches_mc.htm