

ITALY'S STATEMENT ON MINE ACTION
**(Geneva – 12/16 May, 2003 – Standing Committee on mine clearance,
mine awareness and related technologies)**

Mr. Co-Chair,

I wish to provide the last update on Italian assistance to international mine action occurred since the last Standing Committees, in February 2003.

The main priorities for our assistance in the 2003 budget - so far totalling 2,58 million euros - have been identified as follows:

- Continuing our support to humanitarian de-mining efforts in **Angola**, with a 700.000 euros contribution;
- Support to humanitarian emergency operations in **Iraq**, with a contribution of 500,000 euros;
- Continuing our support to humanitarian de-mining in the Balkans and Caucasus, with contributions to **Bosnia-Herzegovina** (400,000 euros), **Croatia** (168,000 euros) and **Azerbaijan** (200,000 euros);
- Support to the **Yemeni** national program, with a 200,000 euros contribution;
- Support to the **Organization of American States** for mine action in Central America, with a contribution of 100,000 euros;
- Support to the follow-up activities carried out to correctly implement and universalize the Ottawa Convention, with specific contributions to the "**Sponsorship Programme**" (67,000 euros) and to the "**Implementation Support Unit**" (45,000 euros);
- Support to the activities of the NGO "**Geneva Call**" (100,000 euros contribution), aimed at universalizing the Ottawa Convention by promoting Non State Actors adherence to its principles and objectives;
- Support to the UNMAS "**Emergency Response Plan**", based in Brindisi, with a contribution of 100,000 euros.

I have also the pleasure to inform partners that Italy has already started internal administrative procedures to re-finance, after 2003, the "**Fund for**

Humanitarian De-mining", the main national financial instrument to support international mine action which disbursed 15 million euros in the period 2001 - 2003.

I wish, moreover, to underline that Italy hosted in Rome - from 7th till 9th April 2003 - the annual seminary of the "Landmine Monitor Report" researchers, granting an ad hoc contribution of 200,000 euros. The Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs competent for mine action, Senator Alfredo Luigi Mantica, attended the closing plenary of the event, in order to underline the acknowledgement of the Italian Government for the decisive role played by the civil society in the common fight against landmines.

As in previous occasions, I would like in the end to stress the need that International Organizations and NGOs assure a constant flow of information on project monitoring and post project evaluation.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.