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STATEMENT BY SWEDEN

Eighth Meeting of the States Parties (8MSP) to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines, and Their Destruction, Dead Sea, Jordan, 18-22 November 2007

Your Royal Highness, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first congratulate the Kingdom of Jordan and HRH Prince Mired for having taken over the Chairmanship of the 8 MSP.

Over the last couple of years, Sweden has continued to increase its technical and financial assistance to countries both on a bilateral basis and to international organisations, in order to fulfil the obligations set forth in article 6 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty.

The overall goal of Swedish support for mine action is to assist people who have been affected by war and conflicts to make it possible for them to return to their homes and an existence under peaceful conditions. We believe that it is important to have an integrated approach to the issues of anti-personnel mines and other explosive remnants of war as they both present obstacles to development and economic growth. Mine action is therefore a tool to reduce poverty and facilitate development for individuals and for nations.

National ownership is of course of utmost importance if mine action is to be successful in the long run. Sweden supports countries' own efforts to remedy their mine or other ERW problems. Furthermore, we like to see strengthened national institutions and structures and integrating mine action into national development plans. A dialogue between donors and recipients about obligations that follow from being a States party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty is also important.

It is also increasingly important that mine action moves from supply-driven approaches to a demand-driven public service. This, we believe, should be managed by national governments through their poverty reduction strategies and national development plans, responding to the needs of local communities. This is particularly important when a country is moving from an 'emergency assistance' phase to a reconstruction or development phase. Some humanitarian mine action is continuously required. The large majority of mined areas are, however, well known and should be considered long-term development problems which the mine affected country has the responsibility for. It is also important that mine affected countries show their commitment to mine action by putting national resources into it.

However, very often mine action is, and will be, dependent on donor countries for its survival. Funding of mine action should therefore be a long-term task for donors. The Swedish support to mine action has therefore a long-term perspective.

To get down to more specifics, Sweden will continue its work with mine action in developing countries in the coming years. In 2007, contributions from Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) to Mine Action will reach approximately 13 million euro. The funding modalities will continue to be cash contributions to well-established mine action organizations, such as the UN agencies, Swedish governmental organizations, and international and Swedish NGOs. Some of the mine-affected countries that have received funding in 2007 are Lebanon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sri Lanka, Iraq, the Sudan, Somalia, Angola, Burundi, Jordan, Malawi, Senegal, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Afghanistan. UNDP, UNICEF, and UNMAS have received support for thematic programmes and/or core funding in 2007. As in the past, the mine action support will be focused mainly on mine-clearance, but also on mine risk education and advocacy. We do of course also support victim assistance as part of our development assistance to the health sector. Approximately 40% of the Swedish funds are integrated in long-term development cooperation programmes with our partner countries. This is a percentage that is likely to increase in coming years.

In addition, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has contributed more than 1 million euro for mine action to GICHD, Land Mine Monitor Report, UNMAS, NCRD, ISU and Mine Action Canada.

Sweden believes that the Nairobi Action Plan is the way forward for donor countries as well as for recipients to fulfil the obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty. We are committed to its implementation.

As a donor country, Sweden believes that moving ahead with the concept of good practices applied to maximizing effectiveness and efficiency is within reach. This is particularly important with respect to coordination and standards in accordance with the goals set up in the Nairobi action plan. We need to make sure that our efforts are being used in the best possible way and where the needs are the greatest in order to make the progress we want in implementing the Nairobi Action Plan.

Sweden has long been a proponent of the CCW and we welcome that the Protocol V on ERW has entered into force. Sweden encourages states that have not ratified the protocol to do so as soon as possible.

Sweden supports the Sponsorship Programme for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty administered by the GICHD to make it possible for mine-affected countries with limited resources to participate in the meetings of the Convention and encourage other States to do the same.

Thank you Mr.Chairman.