

***Eight Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction***

***Jordan – Dead Sea, 18-22 November 2007***



**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA  
STATEMENT**

**Agenda Item 11. (c) Consideration of the general status and operation of the Convention - Clearing mined areas**

***Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentleman,***

*Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the State parties that are in process of fulfilling the Article 5. obligations. Our annual Mine action plans for mine clearance projects reflect clearly our intensive efforts to reduce our mine suspected areas and to clear present mine fields.*

*In this respect, Bosnia and Herzegovina during this year has maintained high level of mine clearance and suspected area reduction through number of general and systematic survey, technical survey and mine clearance projects.*

*As it was reported on the last Meeting of the Standing Committees, our 2007 annual mine action plan anticipates reduction of mine suspected area in total of around 200 million m<sup>2</sup>*

*Applying different area reduction methods in first nine months of 2007, mine suspected area in Bosnia and Herzegovina was reduced for around 110,5 km<sup>2</sup>. Out of this total amount, 6,5 million m<sup>2</sup> of mined areas were cleared through technical survey and mine clearance operations, 8,2 million m<sup>2</sup> was reduced through general survey and the rest of around 96 million m<sup>2</sup> was reduced through analysis and estimation of suspected area within systematic survey operations.*

*During these mine clearance operations in first nine months of 2007, we found and destroyed 1262 AP mines, 52 AT mines and 771 unexploded ordinances. This is in average of around 8,5 mines per hectare of cleared minefield.*

*As we speak, there are further 3,5 million m<sup>2</sup> of mine clearance projects as well as 2,6 million m<sup>2</sup> of technical survey works in progress. We also expect completion of several more tenders for mine clearance works during this month and that will most certainly add to our total annual results until the end of demining season for this year.*

*It is important to underline that this year we recorded the lowest annual number of new mine victims since end of war twelve years ago. That is total of 18 casualties, out of which five persons were killed and 13 injured.*

*We expect that that further comprehensive implementation of MRA projects in local communities and MRA educational programs in schools in connection with permanent marking projects, which is one of our priority strategic aims, will in near future result with no new mine victims. Our ambition is to achieve mine safe environment as soon as possible and we consider that an important step toward total eradication of all minefields in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*In general, this year we estimate that we will achieve again approximately the same results as in past two years and that is around 11 million m<sup>2</sup> of mine clearance and further 160-180 million m<sup>2</sup> of suspected area reduction through systematic and general survey, with total financial input of around 25 million Euros including donor and national budgets and in kind work of national capacities.*

*This is recognizable trend of financing. The donors funding for BH throughout past several years remained more or less constant on the annual level of around 13 to 15 million Euros. At the same time, the increase of participation of state budget funding of mine action is present, but available funds in general are still rather insufficient. For example, in 2006 we had the same picture, as the state institutions allocated around 10 million Euros for mine action while international funding provided additional 15 million Euros, in total again around 25 million Euros.*

*This is significant amount, but unfortunately still rather insufficient to employ all the present capacities that can achieve projected maximum of around 30 million m<sup>2</sup> of mine clearance on annual level. With present average costs of mine clearance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this full capacity utilization requires available annual funding on the level of around 40 million Euros.*

*This is one of the several important conclusions of evaluation process of present BH Mine action strategy that was recently conducted by BHMACE experts in cooperation with other mine action stakeholders.*

*According to the results of this evaluation of existing Mine Action Strategy over the period 2005 – 2007 and assessment for 2008, it can be concluded that there has been significant progress in the elimination of the general mine threat in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mine clearance works in urban areas and on locations considered as priorities for the return of refugees and displaced persons as well as those for reconstruction of basic infrastructure are completed.*

*National mine action structure is fully developed and operational capacities for mine action are present. All necessary standards for the organization of work, field implementation, recording and quality control of operational activities were endorsed and implemented.*

*Operational capacities are fully developed with a tendency of further improvement. Unfortunately, the fact is that present operational capacities were significantly unemployed throughout past years due to ever present lack of sufficient funding and consequently the respective Strategic plans and annual operational plans were never 100% realized.*

**Mr. Chairman,**

*I would like to underline that Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been fully committed to the implementation of the Convention's aims and obligations as well as mutually agreed tasks given by subsequent progress reports and we will proceed with best efforts to do so.*

*Nevertheless, despite our strong commitment, as we already stated on past 7MSP in Geneva and again on last meetings of standing committees, Bosnia and Herzegovina due to significant level of mine contamination still present in our country, will not be in position to fulfill obligations stated under article 5. of the Convention until our completion deadline on 01. March 2009.*

*In that respect, Bosnia and Herzegovina already started the process of preparation for extension request. We recently concluded the process of evaluation of past and present achievements and just finishing subsequent preparation of realistic, transparent and achievable strategic plan for the period beyond 2009.*

*Our new strategic plan is based on three main premises*

- first; to support future full achievement of convention's aims and obligations*
- second; to serve as realistic basis for the continuity and strategic progress of mine action in future period and*
- third; to ensure stable and continuous funding for mine action as insufficient funding could continue to undermine our efforts in future.*

*Both of these documents, namely evaluation and new strategic plan, will present a basis for upcoming process of evaluation of our imminent extension request to this distinguish forum.*

*Furthermore, we would also like to express our intention to use a voluntary template, proposed on 7MSP and further discussed on last standing committees meeting as applicable addition to our upcoming extension request. The voluntary template is, in our view, useful and proper instrument for assessment of any future extension request.*

*This will be done in proper timeframe well in advance of the next MSP, as previously discussed and advised.*

*Therefore, in the conclusion, Bosnia and Herzegovina express its full support to the work of the Presidency and the states chairing and co-chairing this committee for the preparation of necessary documents namely guidelines, questionnaires and calendars of the key dates. These serve as proper guideline enabling us to accomplish preparations for extension request and in that respect to facilitate our future completion of obligations given under article 5. of the Convention.*

**Thank you**