



Press Release

Angola receives support from the European Union to develop national demining plan

Luanda and Geneva 30 April 2014 – Angola, one of the world’s most heavily mine-affected countries, is carrying out a national workshop sponsored by the European Union, to discuss the development of a national demining plan, identifying challenges and recommending solutions to these challenges. It is doing so in order to comply with its 2018 deadline under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention.

“Meeting the deadline set by the Convention is a priority for Angola,” said Ret. General Santana Andre Pitra, President of the National Demining Commission, CNIDAH. “With the support of international partners, we will take stock of the achievements and demining challenges that remain. We are thankful to these partners and to the European Union for contributing to our national effort.”

“This workshop is an opportunity for Angola and its partners to revise its demining work plan in order to fulfill its Convention’s obligations,” said Juan Carlos Ruan, Mine Action Specialist with the Convention’s secretariat, which is supporting Angola in the organization of the workshop. “This is especially important since Angola will have to update the international community on its efforts at the Convention’s Third Review Conference in June in Mozambique.”

Many of the world’s leading demining organizations are taking part in the workshop, including the HALO Trust, the Mines Advisory Group, Norwegian People’s Aid and APOPO. In addition, several national non-governmental organizations and government entities are participating in this workshop.

“This presence of so much national and international expertise in Angola provides us with an opportunity to review with our partners our national strategy and to strengthen our response to the remaining contamination,” said Santana Andre Pitra.

When joining the Convention in 2002, Angola committed to remove all anti-personnel mines from its territory by 2013. However, due to massive landmine contamination, estimated in excess of 2,000 hazardous areas, Angola requested additional time to complete demining activities, receiving an interim extension until 1 January 2018. By that time, it is expected that Angola will have a clear idea regarding the magnitude of its remaining challenge and a clear plan to deal with it.

Funding for the workshop is part of a two-year European Union Council Decision to support the Convention and its humanitarian goal of ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines.

The Convention was adopted in Oslo in 1997, opened for signature in Ottawa the same year and entered into force on 1 March 1999. Since entering into force, millions of square metres of once dangerous lands have been released for normal human activity and more than 47.5 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed.

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit

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