APMBC intersessional meetings
Panel Discussion
Addressing anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature under the framework of the Convention

Wednesday, 1 July 2020, 16:15 – 17:15 CET

Organizers: The Committee on Article 5 Implementation
(Austria, Canada, Norway, Zambia)

▪ IHL and Policy, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

1. **NPA: Operator's Perspective of improvised mines vs IEDs - NPA (Hans) (with a reference to the work of the IMAS review board) – 5 min**

Suggested talking points for Rune:
- The issue of IEDs and improvised mines is not new – as a sector we've been dealing with improvised mines in countries like Colombia, Afghanistan and others for years. But the scale of new use in the middle east since 2015 onwards resulted in extensive discussions in recent years on this issue and how to address IEDs and improvised mines.
- In 2017-2019, there was a large effort by the IMAS board, secretariat, and membership to update IMAS to better reflect how IEDs should be addressed in the humanitarian context of mine action. In particular, important updates were done to the scope of IMAS, the glossary and other IMAS modules as well as the development of IMAS on urban/building clearance and the creations of Minimum Data Requirements as an annex to the information management IMAS.
- From NPA's perspective – if a victim activated device meets the definition of a mine, as defined by the Mine Ban Treaty, then it's an AP mine - <u>it does not matter how, or where, the mine was made, or who used it</u>. It's important to emphasise we're talking about victim activated devices here and not time-delay and command-detonated IEDs, which aren't covered by the APMBC.
- It's not useful to define a device only by how it's made, need to take into account 1) type of device, 2) context, 3) purpose for which its being cleared.
  - Fotos Kilo 7 Ramadi Iraq.
- For us as operators, the term IED is too broad and general of a term covering very different types of devices by the fact that they are improvised and not produced in a factory. Using the catch-all term "IEDs" to report improvised AP mines does not separate out those victim activated IEDs that also meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine from IEDs that don't (like time or command detonated IEDs). Failure to report mined areas, and efforts to address them, under the treaty puts states parties in non-compliance with the treaty.
- Clearly, mines of an improvised nature are both IEDs *AND* AP mines. The confusion and a sense of disconnect in the mine action community largely exists due to pervious trainings from different schools, often military trainings, that many of the operational staff addressing these items in the field have had and some were just not trained to be aware of the definition of an AP mine in the APMBC or of the importance to record items as such. This is why further training and education of our field staff on the latest revisions to IMAS is often needed.
- this is **not just a legal treaty obligation issue**. How these devices are recorded also has potentially far reaching impact on efficiency and effectiveness of survey and clearance operations on the ground, if devices are recorded in the wrong way (for example as spot tasks and not as SHAs and CHAs).

- As operators, we need to be able to record the operational data needed to address the devices safely AND to record these devices as AP Mines under the treaty. It's entirely possible to do both and we do it in order to meet the various reporting requirements from national authorities, donors and our own organizations.
  - Example disaggregation table.

Why is this disaggregation of data important for operations?
- It's essential items are recorded correctly in the field and in Information Management systems to help ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of survey and clearance operations both now and further down the line.
- Incorrectly recording mines of an improvised nature risks obscuring our correct understanding of the problem and could prevent us being able to provide an effective humanitarian response to affected communities in need of protection., e.g.
  - Categorize everything as and IED risks incorrectly treating tasks as EOD spot tasks clearing single items not as SHA/CHA and treating the whole area as contaminated;
  - could result in incomplete prioritisation;
  - might ultimately risk items being missed;
  - important to identify the actual type and model of the EO so that you can plan properly for the survey/clearance task with the right equipment/training for teams and take appropriate risk and threat reduction measures.
  - To inform EORE operations on the specific threat and risk posed by the munition.
  - risks international cooperation and assistance being misinformed.
- It's vital we get this right as a community. We've faced and collectively found solutions to challenges over the last two decades of the mine ban treaty and can do so with this issue too.