

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to convey to you the greetings of His Royal Highness Prince Mired bin Raad Al Hussein, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Special Envoy for the Ottawa Convention to Ban Anti-personnel Landmines, wishing success for your meeting and thanking those in charge.

I am honored to talk to you about the Jordanian experience in the field of demining, and in particular some of the elements that helped end our commitments towards Article V of the agreement, and about the steps we have taken since having declared completion

The origins of the mine problem in Jordan goes back a long time and is a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict, where the Jordanian armed forces planted mines in different areas, especially on the borders, in addition to some fields that were planted by Israel on Jordanian lands before their restoration.

Jordan acceded to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty on August 11, 1998 and ratified it on November 13, 1998. It entered into force for the Kingdom as of May 1999.

Since that time two major milestones can be highlighted in the life of mine action in Jordan.

The first one was the issuance of the Royal Decree establishing the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) by Law No. (34) Of 2000, and the law stipulated that the NCDR is an independent civil body with a legal personality that has financial and administrative independence.

The second one was the Royal decree was issued by appointing HRH Prince Mired bin Raad Al Hussein in November 2004 with the

formation of the Board of Directors headed by His Royal Highness, with the membership of representatives from the public and private sectors, and the law was amended in 2015 giving the committee full powers to supervise and approve the operations of the concerned local and international authorities on Jordanian lands.

The Committee at this time put all its efforts into getting rid of the danger of mines and remnants of war, reducing the resulting impact, integrating the Committee's various programs into development, social, humanitarian and economic programs in Jordan, rehabilitating the survivors and integrating them into Jordanian society, and educating the Syrian refugees about the dangers of mines and war remnants upon their return to their homes in the future.

As many of you may know, Jordan declared completion of its commitments under Article 5 in 2012.

Jordan was first country in the Middle East to meet this important milestone.

Now, ladies and gentlemen. I wouldn't be honest if I were to say that this was achieved without challenges. On the way to completion we learned a number of important lessons that may be of use to other States Parties. In particular the importance of the establishment of a sustainable national capacity for implementation.

1. Political Will

First and foremost is the matter of Political will: In the case of Jordan the support of His Majesty the King, the Prime Minister and the armed forces played an essential role.

It is fair to say that the decree of the 2005 and the appointment of His Royal Highness was a game changer.

Prior to this, the national capacity to address contamination in a systematic manner was very limited. The political will of Jordan was essential to ensure the building of capacity.

The leadership and transparency demonstrated by His Majesty King Hussein, His Majesty King Abdullah II, His Royal Highness Prince Mired, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Authority, and various ministries and government agencies in achieving was essential for this success.

2. Partnerships

Partnership was another critical element to building the national capacity of Jordan. The technical support the UNDP and NPA were essential in this regard.

As in many countries, our soldiers were trained to carry out demining operations. However, humanitarian demining and everything that goes with it was absent. In this regard, the partnership was crucial.

Local and international partnerships: such as the Geneva Center GICHD, various United Nations agencies, especially the United Nations Development Fund, the Red Cross, the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA) and many other partners.

One critical element of this is the involvement of the Jordanian Armed Forces, their involvement in early capacity building efforts ensures that today, we have the sustainable national capacity to address any previously unknown contamination.

In this regard, it is critical the national entities be involved as early as possible to ensure that national capacity building begins at an early stage.

3. International Cooperation and Assistance

Jordan was extremely lucky to have the support of 23 donors throughout the life of its programme. As you can imagine the support of donor's countries was essential for Jordan's capacity building efforts. Jordan received more than \$45 million in generous donor support.

This kind of support would not have been possible without the political will demonstrated by Jordan. Essential to this was the government allocation of \$2.5 million annually.

Political Will, Partnership and International Cooperation and Assistance was essential for Jordan to develop the main elements of its national capacity.

With these elements in place, Jordan's strategic plan of 2005 contained plans for a sustainable national capacity

- a. Highly experienced retirees of the Royal Engineering Corps.
- b. Technical standards and national guidelines as per IMAS, standard operating procedures and national mine ban law.
- c. Quality control team from the highly experienced retirees of the Royal Engineering Corps.

4. The first strategic plan was in 2005 for a period of five years, followed by plans for the following years.

5. The authority has full powers of supervision and quality control for all removal operations, including the armed forces working in the removal.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Until mid-2005, the committee did not have any external support, as it was suffering from a lack of experience, resources and a small number of administrative staff, as these factors became challenges to the Jordanian clearance program and we took it seriously and started working according to the plan that we set as it was the right start. Fortunately A technical advisor was attached from the United Nations Development Program from 2004 to 2010, where he provided a lot of help, especially in the field of capacity building and opening doors with donor countries, as he had previous experience in one of the countries affected by the mine problem. The committee took it upon itself to employ people with extensive experience and according to the high requirements required with a focus on the English language to assist in translation work into Arabic and to communicate with donor countries and international partners.

One of the most important challenges, especially after the global financial crisis, was the financial support for the projects, but due to the given authority, we were able to work with the private sector in the field of survey and clearance of solar energy project areas and the search for gas in Jordan, which helped cover some of the expenses in addition to relying on The Royal Engineering Corps and

the human resources available in the Committee were utilized to the best of their ability, in addition to the presence of the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), which was able to provide the necessary external support for its projects in Jordan. Priorities were also set for the importance of areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Following our declaration of completion, and given that anti-personnel mines were only part of the contamination dealt with by Jordan, we ensured to retain a sustainable national capacity to deal with any contamination that was discovered.

To ensure that we continued to have the capacity to address other threats we ensured to retain a number of specialists in the field of removal of remnants of war, and in awareness and victim assistance to carry out any duties required at the time and they are still permanent cadre .

The NCDR maintains a permanent cadre in addition to those who previously worked with us in this field and who were trained by us and by the Norwegian People's Aid and are on call at any time, and we still retain all the devices and mechanisms to carry out any further duties required.

We are still implementing some survey and clearance programs for remnants of war on the soil of the Kingdom, where the Royal Jordanian Engineering Corps is on call to deal with any remnants found by the committee, and it will remain a continuous duty for them even after the national committee's existence stage.

As for the risk education and awareness, we in the Committee still maintain a small cadre specialized in this field, in addition to the

presence of the Committee's liaison officers whom they are landmine survivors from various regions who work in the field of awareness and follow-up on the affairs of those survivors, assisting them according to the available resources and maintaining their database.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We store all the data related to the Jordanian clearance program and the survivors, in our information management system (IMSMA) and it will be handled over in the future to the Jordanian Armed Forces, where they have the geographical information center. This is incredibly important as the data offers important information on where contamination may be more prevalent.

We are still working on developing our capabilities in terms of participation in the courses held by the Geneva International Center and the Arab Cooperation Program under the supervision of the Center and the Lebanese Center for Demining, and we are fully ready and prepared to assist and cooperate with any party that desires that.

As I mentioned, one of the keys advice I have for States it to think with the end in mind. Build your national capacity as soon as possible and take advantage of the lessons learned from different partners.

Last but not least, allow me to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to all the donor countries and to all our partners as without their support we would not have been able to carry out our required duties, and to you for your kind listening.