



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

November 2023 Geneva

Statement - Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr. President,

Despite strong efforts over the past decade and more, our country is still one of the most mine-contaminated countries in the world and the most severely affected in the region.

The current size of suspected hazardous area is 848 km², which is approximately 1.67% of the total country size. This year until October, through the process of land release, a total of 21 km² of land returned to users and more than 41 km² of land is still in progress.

Based on a more precise understanding of the remaining challenge, and in accordance with Article 5, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been granted an extension of the deadline until March 1, 2027.

Considering that BiH is paving the way to sustainable development, mine action should be seen as something that removes danger, reduce accidents and fear, and at the same time enabling and accelerating wider sustainable development.

Through mine risk education projects implemented by accredited organizations in 2023 more than 54,000 people have been warned of mine danger. Special attention is paid to children of primary education and paying special attention to gender equality.

In 2024 we are expecting the beginning of project implementation through the IPA-Instrument for EU Pre-Accession Assistance in the total amount of 10 million euros. Program will implement in more 20 municipalities, which will last for three years, more than 70 km² of land will be released. We also expecting the project of clearance of the right bank of Sava River in cooperation with BiH Ministry of Transport and Communication and World Bank.

In February 2023, the project of the new IMSMA-Core has begun, presenting gradual switch of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Information System to a new modern IMSMA Core technology. This will ensure more accurate, transparent and reliable data on mine action.

For this reason, it is required to once again emphasize the crucial key role and importance of donor contribution in the coming period as well.

At the moment, there are 24 accredited organizations for mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Five of them are government organizations, seven commercial organizations and fourteen non-government organizations. Within accredited organizations, 1.200 persons are engaged, i.e. 900 deminers and 300 persons accredited for managerial and supervision tasks. Organizations accredited for mine actions have at their disposal 24 accredited machines, 1.131 metal detectors and 31 accredited explosive detection dogs.

In 2023, Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Center in cooperation with BH Ministry of Civil Affairs and Demining Commission has started the revision of National Mine Action Strategy for period 2018-2025. In the previous period of implementation of the Strategy from 2018 to 2023, Bosnia and Herzegovina release a total of 221 km² mine suspected area.

One of the goals of the National Mine Action Strategy states that the size and impact of the mine contamination problem is clearly confirmed and will be resolved in accordance with the standards for mine action in BiH, while ensuring the return of safe areas and its further use.

In 2023 there was a mine accident with a fatal outcome, which is why we continue with full capacity warning activities through independent projects, but also through integration into current mine countermeasures operations in order to put mine danger in focus.

The main goal is in ensuring the conditions for the complete inclusion of mine victims in the socio economic activities, through development of programs that will improve psycho-social, medical and other professional services for mine victims.

Internal and international consultations regarding the National Standard are currently underway with the aim of harmonizing it with the current IMAS and lessons learned.

Thank you for your attention!