



THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**Fifth Review Conference (5RC) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the
Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on
Their Destruction**

Siem Reap, Cambodia from 25 to 29 November 2024.

Statement

Agenda item 8. Review of the operation and status of the Convention

(e) Other matters essential for achieving the aims of the Convention

(i) Cooperation and assistance

**Ministry of the Interior
Civil Protection Directorate**

NOVEMBER 2024

Mr. President, Excellences', Ladies and Gentlemen,

International cooperation and assistance are essential to our joint efforts in creating a mine free world. As a country which has come a long way being still the only EU country with mine contamination, to country free of mines in 2026, a donor recipient country, to country that now donates to other mine contaminated countries, we firmly believe that the Republic of Croatia's accumulated experience will be relevant in all of the mine action pillars in years to come, especially in the endorsing of the terms and Actions of the Chapter eight (8) of the The Siem Reap – Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029.

Please allow me to emphasize just a several important key events that have been accomplished since the November 2019 and the 4th RC:

- In October 2023, the first *International Donor Conference* for humanitarian demining of Ukraine was held in Croatia. This event had gathered 34 participating countries, with almost half of billion euros pledged for the humanitarian demining of Ukraine, with the Republic of Croatia donating additional 5 million euros alongside with the previous donation of 4 million euros for capacity building, procurement of demining machines, engagement of experts in partnership with UNDP – and 1 million euros to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to help Ukrainian farmers and food producers resume work in regions most affected by explosive remnants of war. *International Donor Conference* also included 2nd working day with expertpanel discussions on the topic of humanitarian demining, gathering more than 150 experts from 30 countries. In addition, an educational (EORE) picture book for the children of Ukraine about mines and other explosive ordnances dangers has been donated on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior of the Croatia.**
- Continuous cooperation is fostered with Geneva international Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) with participation of the Republic of Croatia in two case studies – first “National Capacities and Residual contamination” and second “Difficult terrain in Mine Action”, along with the two training courses – “Quality Management in Mine Action” held within the Italian “C-IED” complex of the Centre of Excellence in Rome, Italy, organized for the representatives of the NMAA professionals from the Southeast Europe region and the Non-Technical survey training course**

for the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Cooperation Programme (EECCA RCP NTS) held in Croatia.

- Furthermore, the international Mine Action Symposium has been held annually for 20 consecutive years in Croatia gathering more than three thousand (3.000) participants from sixty-seven (67) countries. This Symposium provides a unique opportunity for professionals and organizations engaged in Mine Action to connect, share experiences, and forge collaborations. Through panel discussions, workshops, and networking sessions, exhibition of equipment, participants built relationships that transcended borders, fostering a global approach to tackling the complex challenges in mine action.
- Since the last Review Conference, the Republic of Croatia also established important bilateral cooperation in several aspects of Mine Action with Republic of Turkey, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Serbia and Ukraine. Moreover, in the late 2024 the donation of 8 mine detection dogs along with training of personnel was provided towards the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- Throughout the activities of Croatian non-government organization “Croatia Helps”, in partnership with the Croatian Government, more than 450 children from Ukraine and Syrian Arab Republic visited Croatian seaside resorts as a part of broader war relief programme which included explosive ordinance risk education lectures as well.
- Alongside certification of demining machines and EOD trainings, scientific cooperation and testing of new technologies is one of the most important elements of the activities provided through CROMAC – Centre for testing, Development and training company, which, in the last five years, participates in various projects such as “Biological methods (bees) for explosive detection”, research project “Artificial Intelligence for Detection of Explosive Ordnance Extended” (AIDEDeX) and the testing of advanced multi-frequency metal detectors, UAV 3D GPR systems, UAV-based synthetic aperture radar system (GPSAR) and MineKafon airborne demining system on the testing polygons in Croatia.

In conclusion, we are convinced that we are on the right track. We sincerely hope that in the course of the next five years the number of countries that will complete their mine clearance effort will increase, coupled with reduced

number of new mine victims throughout international cooperation and assistance efforts of States parties. Finally, it is important to mention the importance of fostering continuous partnership and cooperation of States Parties with the United Nations and other international and non-governmental organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) – and many others – which are one of the most important cornerstones of our Mine Action community with whom we want to continue our fruitful collaboration.

Thank you, Mr. President.