



Regional Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Impact of Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines Within the Framework of the Convention 13-15 February 2024 – Accra, Ghana

Day One – Tuesday 13 February 2024

Special Opening Session

Ballroom 2 – 09:00 – 10:15

The adoption of the Convention – a landmark humanitarian disarmament instrument – 25 years ago, was a result of a unique partnership between civil society and like-minded governments committed to addressing the devastating humanitarian consequences caused by anti-personnel mines.

By the time the Convention was adopted, annual casualties had surpassed 10,000. Thanks to the norm created by the treaty, new casualties fell to an all-time low of slightly over 3,000 in 2013 (Landmine Monitor). Since then however, new use of anti-personnel mines – mostly of improvised nature and by armed non-state actors – has led to a rise in global casualty rates around the world. Addressing this ever-growing problem including by raising awareness of their impact, is of the utmost importance.

Representative figures of the Convention community will lead the Conference’s opening session. Distinguished panellists include,

- Honourable Ambrose Dery, Minister for the Interior
Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
Margaret Arach Orech, Founder and Director, Uganda Landmine Survivor Association and Ambassador for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines
His Excellency Dr Ly Thuch, Senior Minister of Cambodia, Vice-President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, and current President of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
His Excellency Irchad Razaaly, Ambassador of the European Union to Ghana

Keynote remarks by:

- His Excellency Alhaji Dr Mahamadu Bawumia, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana

Group photo

## Day One – Tuesday 13 February 2024

### Session A2 – 10:45 – 11:00 – Ballroom 2

#### The Big Picture: Why a Regional Conference on Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines

The Convention's preamble records the determination of the States Parties to "put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines that kill or maim hundreds of people every week, mostly innocent and defenceless civilians and especially children, obstruct economic development and reconstruction, inhibit the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons, and have other severe consequences for years after emplacement".

The Convention does not make a distinction between "factory-made" or "improvised" mines. Further, the States Parties have agreed to "strengthen efforts to stigmatise and end the use of these weapons, including new use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, for which all the Convention's provisions apply", by:

- making every effort to identify all areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced;
- ensuring the effective exclusion of civilians until all anti-personnel mines contained therein have been destroyed;
- destroying or ensuring the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control; and
- fulfilling the rights and needs of those who have fallen victim to these weapons.

In this session, **Samuel W Yeboah, Executive Secretary of the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Ghana and Sophie Delfolie, Implementation Support Specialist of the Convention's Implementation Support Unit (ISU)**, will introduce the conference's programme, experts, activists, and innovators working to support the Convention goals.

Coffee break in parallel

### Session A3 – 11:00 – 13:00 – Ballroom 2

#### Perspective on Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines

While progress has been made in implementing mine clearance obligations under the Convention – with 30 States Parties having declared completion of their Article 5 obligation – the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature by armed non-state actors has exacerbated the problem.

In many cases, the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature is taking place in States Parties that previously, did not have an obligation under Article 5 and in other cases, in States Parties that had declared completion of their Article 5 obligations and are now affected by this type of weapon; this is particular the case in West Africa and the Sahel Region.

Given the impact of improvised anti-personnel mines on peace, security, and development, addressing this growing threat is a timely if not critical endeavour. The panellists will highlight the situation, discuss the importance of humanitarian principles in addressing the threat including through and with non-state armed actors, and open the floor for a question-and-answer session. Panellists include,

- **Theò Bajon, Associate Researcher Conventional Arms and Ammunition Programme, UN Institute for Disarmament Research on the global impact of improvised anti-personnel mines;**
- **Katrin Atkins, Research Specialist, Landmine Monitor**
- **Pélagie Manzan Dékou, Supra Legal Advisor-IHL Advisory Services, International Committee of the Red Cross on upholding humanitarian principles;**
- **Juan Carlos Ruan, Director, Implementation Support Unit on possible acquired obligations under the Convention;**

Break for Lunch

## Day One – Tuesday 13 February 2024

Session A4 – Ballroom 2 – 14:30 – 16:30

### What? Where? By Whom? The Use and Impact of Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines

This will be an opportunity to gain an increased understanding of the impact of improvised anti-personnel mines in the region and efforts to address the humanitarian impact caused by these weapons from the perspective of the States Parties themselves. Participating States are invited to present on the situation being experienced in their territories.

This session will be led by the **Chair of the Convention’s Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Alvaro Alejandro Gomez Ocampo, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the UN at Geneva** and followed by a discussion.

Session A5 – Ballroom 2 – 16:30 – 17:00

### Closing the Loop

To widen the conversation and include the rich experience of the audience, delegates will be invited to provide final thoughts and feedback to organisers with a view to not only evaluate the day but also to provide food for thought prior to continuing. The session will be led by the Convention President, **H.E. Senior Minister Ly Thuch, Vice President of the Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority**.

## Day Two – Wednesday 14 February 2024

Session B1 – 09:00 – 09:15 – Ballroom 2

### Spark and Start Session

Kick-start a (second) day of networking opportunities with the help of an inspiring speaker.

Session B2 – 09:15 – 11:00 – Ballroom 2

### Action Roles for Mine Action Centres and National Commissions

Developing and/or maintaining national capacities for addressing the humanitarian impact of improvised anti-personnel mines within the framework of the Convention is paramount. Commissions for Small Arms and Light Weapons and Mine Action Centres in the region have the opportunity to take leading roles in public sensitisation and formulation of appropriate policies to address the ever-growing threat of improvised mines.

This session seeks to provide an overview of lessons learnt and best practices (e.g. information management, explosive ordnance risk education, reporting, victim assistance) on the importance of state-civil society collaboration. It is hoped that by documenting examples of good practice, national mine action authorities, Commissions, UN agencies and partner governments will benefit from enhanced understanding regarding the types of interventions that are most appropriate and have the greatest impact. Expert presenters will include representatives from,

- **Mohamed Laghdaf Mohamedou Baham, Coordinator, Mauritania’s National Humanitarian Demining Program for Development on the role and challenge in a national context;**
- **Harald Schmittgall, Advisor, Operational Efficiency and Security Sector Liaison, Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining on the role and capacities of these structures; and,**
- **Josephin Dresner, Director of Policy and Strategic Partnerships of the Mines Advisory Group, and,**
- **Robert Iga Afedra, Country Director, Norwegian People’s Aid in Angola, on humanitarian mine clearance operators take on lessons learnt in collaboration.**

Coffee break in parallel

Session B3 – 11:00 – 12:30 – Ballroom 2

### Data. Transparency. Reporting.

Reporting under the Convention, data collection, and information management are deeply interwoven. Yet, a significant number of States have neither collected or supplied information nor have a central system in place that could allow them to report their national challenge in a manner aligned to the Convention's Guide to Reporting.

This session will seek to shed light on the information sought from the States Parties, experiences on collecting information, the role of community liaisons, and lessons learnt from states that have experienced contamination by improvised anti-personnel mines.

The session will be moderated by Juan Carlos Ruan, ISU Director. Panellists will include,

- Khalifa Muhammad Lawan, Legal Affairs Manager - North East Development Commission, Nigeria; and,
- Mariany Monroy, Coordinator, Group of Comprehensive Mine Action, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, Colombia on countries experiencing contamination including with improvised mines on the challenges faced and lessons learnt when it comes to clearing and reporting;
- Ralf Dillmann Trau, Director, Quality Management, Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines on the perspective of civil society on joint efforts to collect information on contamination;
- Sophie Delfolie, Implementation Support Specialist at the Implementation Support Unit on support and reporting tools available;
- Edwin Faigmane, UN Mine Action Service Nigeria on their experience with collecting information.

### Break for Lunch

Session B4 – 14:00 – 15:30 – Ballroom 2

### Reducing the Risk

Mine risk education has the potential to prevent new accidents and save lives. In areas where access is compromised, it will often be the first possible life saving intervention. However, if interventions are to succeed it is of the utmost importance to include the perspective and experience of affected communities themselves in strategies and programmes. These should also be sensitive to gender, age, and disability.

Because one model does not fit all, in this session States and organisations are encouraged to share their own success stories and challenges found in reducing the risk. In addition, first-hand "on the field" accounts will be presented by practitioners themselves. The session will be moderated by **Fadila Saidi épse Berkane, Head of Studies and Report at the Ministry of Mujahideen and Right Holders of Algeria**. Panellists include,

- Young Joo Lee, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Ghana, on the critical nature of mine risk education and innovative approaches;
- Dunas Ezekeil, Youths Awaken Foundation, a local grass root organisation from Nigeria; and,
- Elmehdi Ag Wakina, Director of Programmes, Malian Association for Survival in the Sahel, on the positive impact by national/local organisations;
- François Fall, Humanitarian Mine Action Advisor for West Africa, Mines Advisory Group, with the humanitarian demining operator on their experience in delivery of mine risk education.

### Coffee break in parallel

## Day Two – Wednesday 14 February 2024

Session B5 – 15:30 – 16:30 – Ballroom 2

### Assisting Who, How, and Why?

Providing “victim assistance” (VA) includes fostering the full and effective participation of survivors in society on a basis equal to others. Mine action structures cannot fulfil this mission on their own as humanitarian demining programmes are intended to eventually end. However, these structures have an important role to play in ensuring that the needs of those affected by mines are fulfilled and their rights, guaranteed.

This session will shed light on the efforts and challenges of assisting mine victims and implementing what is one of the core pillars of the Convention. Panellists include,

- Elhadji Seydou Nouro Gaye, Land Release Specialist, Humanity and Inclusion on IMAS 13.10 and its implication for mine action structures;
- Mariany Monroy, Coordinator, Group of Comprehensive Mine Action, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, Colombia, on a State Party’s experience in delivering victim assistance in security environments;
- Mahamad Haroon Mohamoud, mine survivor representative and Child Rights and Disability Advisor, National Disability Agency of Somalia; and,
- Margaret Arach Orech, mine survivor representative from Uganda and disability rights expert from the International Campaign to Ban Landmines on approaching victim assistance from a rights-based perspective;
- Firoz Ali Alizada, Implementation Support Officer and Victim Assistance Expert on the States’ understanding of victim assistance.

Session B6 – 16:30 – 17:00 – Ballroom 2

### Let’s Chat!

Delegates are invited to use this opportunity to network including through bilateral conversations.

## Evening Event – Day Two

### An Evening of Ghanaian Hospitality on the Road to the Fifth Review Conference

Hosts: Delegation of the European Union and the Republic of Ghana

A relaxed opportunity to continue conversations and network.

By the pool of the Movenpick: 18:30 – 21:00

Credentials will be required to attend. More details will follow.



Session C1 09:00 – 11:00 – Ballroom 2

**Your Plan. Your Voice.**

The Convention’s Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024 is an ambitious instrument/roadmap with “actions” and indicators designed by and for States Parties in collaboration with practitioners and organisations. The Plan guides States Parties on various areas of the Convention.

As the Plan comes to an end, it is time to ask ourselves what has worked and what could be improved for a new Action Plan covering the period 2025-2029 (to be adopted at the Fifth Review Conference in Cambodia in November). Adopting a Plan that is effective and can withstand the test of time is an important part of the work being led by the Convention President. The Accra Regional Conference therefore provides a unique opportunity for African countries to provide inputs that could feed into the new Plan for the States by the States Parties. This session will be chaired by Cambodia as Convention President.

The following questions will be key in the group discussions during the session led by Convention President Cambodia, as represented by H.E. Ly Panharith, Secretary General of the Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority,

1. **What aspects of Action 21 of the Oslo Action Plan has worked well or the opposite, could be improved?**
2. **What type of challenges were encountered when implementing Actions 18 to 25?**
3. **Considering the above, what should be re-considered for a next Action Plan?**

All participants are invited to freely join one the following regional sessions. Chairs of the breakout groups will be invited to report back in the plenary.

Group A	Group B	Group C
Benin, Congo, DR Congo, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Togo	Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger	Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sierra Leone

Coffee break in parallel

Session C2 – 11:00 – 12:30 – Ballroom 2

**Is Your National Law up to Standard?**

Article 9 of the Convention clearly states that “Each State Party shall take all appropriate legal, administrative and other measures, including the imposition of penal sanctions, to prevent and suppress any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Convention undertaken by persons or on territory under its jurisdiction or control.” However, 46 States Parties have not reported having such legislation in place or whether existing legislation suffices. As the threat of improvised mines grows in the region, having such legislation in place can only serve the state’s best interest.

In this session, States Parties from the region are encouraged to provide an overview of their own National Laws. **Sophie Delfolie, Implementation Support Specialist of the Implementation Support Unit**, and Panellists will speak on the process including on support available for States Parties,

- **General Brahim Djibrine Brahim, Coordinator, Chad’s National High Commission for Demining; and**
- **Burkina Faso, as representatives of States Parties will present on their own national legislation;**
- **Pélagie Manzan Dékou, Supra Legal Advisor-IHL Advisory Services, International Committee of the Red Cross on the importance of national legislation;**

Break for Lunch

## Day Three – Thursday 15 February 2024

Session C3 – 14:00 – 16:00 – Ballroom 2

### Cooperation and Assistance at Work: South-South, Triangular, Private-Public Initiatives, State-Organisation

Action 47 of the Oslo Action Plan calls on States to “continuously explore opportunities for cooperation, including international, regional and bilateral, cooperation between affected States Parties or South-to-South, with a view to voluntary sharing of best practices and lessons learnt.”

This session, **moderated by Juan Carlos Ruan, Director of the Implementation Support Unit**, foresees States and organisations offering their perspective on cooperation and assistance. The session is set to include various panellists including but not limited to,

- **H.E. Hisanobu Mochizuki, Ambassador of Japan to Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone representing Japan as the Convention President-Designate for 2025 with a donor’s perspective** H.E. Ly Panharith, Secretary General, Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority on Innovative Financing: Private Public Partnerships
- **Col. Koffi Marc Kouiado, Programme Officer, Small Arms Division, Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Economic Community of West African States;**
- **Lt. Col. Djimon Sahgui, Director of Benin’s Center for Advanced Training in Post-Conflict, Demining, and Decontamination Actions on activities and support available to States;**
- **Harro Wittermans, Regional Coordinator of the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute for Eastern and Central Africa, for CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation) and Security Governance Programme, on a regional programme supported by the European Union;**
- **Jérémy Repond, Advisor, External Relations and Governance, Cooperation Programmes, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining;**

Coffee break in parallel

Session C4 – 16:00 – 16:15

### Seeking your Feedback!

A short feedback session to understand what worked, what needs improving for any upcoming conference, and final thoughts.

Closing Session

Session C5 – 16:15 – 17:00 – Ballroom 2

### Next Stop: Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World

The Conference – which will have served as a regional platform to exchange information on the humanitarian and development impact of improvised anti-personnel mines and best practices in addressing their impact is set to come to an end with representatives who will also send the Convention community with a message towards the Fifth Review Conference,

- **Ibou Dembo, Representative of the Initiative for Solidarity Development Actions/Senegalese Association of Mine Victims in representation of mine-affected communities and survivors**
- **H.E. Ly Panharith, Secretary General of the Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, representing Cambodia as President of the Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World**
- **Delegation of the European Union to Ghana**
- **Honourable Ambrose Dery, Minister for the Interior of the Republic of Ghana**