



NEWS RELEASE

## AUSTRALIA LEADS FIGHT AGAINST EXPLOSIVES IN LIBYA

### Multi-million dollar contribution will aid mine action efforts

*NEW YORK, New York, December 12, 2011*—In Libya landmines and unexploded ordnance are among the most insidious effects of recent fighting. Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to benefit from a \$2 million contribution by Australia which focuses on improving the living conditions of people facing the daily danger of mines and explosive remnants of war.

During 2011, Australia was the largest donor to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, managed by the United Nations Mine Action Service, by contributing over \$18 million to the Fund. This is the second time Australia has provided support to mine action in Libya this year. Its initial contribution was instrumental in supporting the establishment of the early mine action response in Libya.

“This is an enormous boost to mine action efforts in Libya,” says Justin Brady, the Acting Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service. “We are grateful that Australia stepped up for our critical operations,” he adds. This contribution confirms Australia’s commitment to supporting mine action and understanding its link to peace and security as well as sustainable development in Libya.”

The funds announced by the Australian Foreign Minister, Kevin Rudd, will enable the implementation of a new ammunition management project in Libya. The project will increase human security by focusing on removing the threat of unexploded ordnance and unsecured munitions from civilians and their communities.

Ian Martin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Libya, commended Australia, “for taking a lead within the donor community to support mine action activities in a critical period when liquidity problems still prevent Libya from directly funding mine action and other urgent humanitarian priorities.”

Max Dyck, Programme Manager for UNMAS in Libya, expressed hope that additional Member States will join the trail blazed by Australia with this donation.

UNMAS is located in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. UNMAS coordinates the Joint Mine Action Coordination Team - Libya.

For further information, please contact:

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