



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) provides key updates on humanitarian mine action including in Afghanistan, DRC, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, Syria and more

Geneva – 04 December 2015. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) briefed the press on several key humanitarian mine action issues earlier on today at the *Palais des Nations*.

“Anti-personnel landmines have no place in our world,” stated Bruno Donat, Chief of the UNMAS Geneva office, echoing the words of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Updated information through specific and detailed fact sheets were provided on several UNMAS programmes including in: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and the Territory of Western Sahara.

Visiting from Mogadishu, Alan MacDonald, UNMAS Programme Director in Somalia, expressed enthusiasm when discussing the Government of Somalia’s mine and explosive hazards clearance plan entitled the Badbaado Plan, translating to “saving life / giving protection.” Mr. MacDonald further explained “the Badbaado plan outlines the Federal Government’s approach to explosive hazard management in line with Somalia’s obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The plan addresses requirements for clearance implementation and coordination at federal and state levels.”

“Mine action is humanitarian action” stated Mr. Donat as he elaborated on the work of UNMAS, when speaking on the preparation for the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. In particular, he highlighted UNMAS collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). He explained the lead role of UNMAS as coordinator of the Mine Action Area of Responsibility within the UNHCR-led Global Protection Cluster, and mentioned, *inter alia*, a specific cooperation with OCHA on the ‘Whole of Syria’ humanitarian approach.

UNMAS applies expertise to mitigate the threat of an increasingly wide range of explosive hazards, from unexploded missiles, artillery shells, rockets, grenades and mortars, to unsafe and unsecured weapons and ammunition, improvised explosive devices and cluster bombs. UNMAS leads, coordinates and carries out efforts to mitigate these threats when mandated by the United Nations Security Council or, when requested by the Secretary-General or an affected country, often in response to a humanitarian emergency.

Copies of the latest Report of the Secretary-General on Assistance in Mine Action, and the resolution on Assistance in Mine Action adopted recently without a vote by the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 16 October were also provided.

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