

Annex A: Donor Updates, MASG Meeting - 27 April 2022

(Note. All speakers thanked Germany for their role as Chair of the MASG over the past two years, and welcomed Ambassador Yves Marek of France as the Chair for 2022)

1.1 Australia. The representative of Australia noted that Australia remains firmly committed to mine action, and in particular the APMBC, CCM and CCW. Australia is concerned about the Russian use of landmines in Ukraine, which is against the provisions of CCW AP II, and these events draw into sharp focus the ongoing need for coordinated, effective humanitarian mine action. Australia has committed AUD 65 million in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. Australia is currently considering options for specific support earmarked for mine action purposes, and to this end welcomed the update from UNDP and the Drumlanrig Group on their activities in Ukraine. In addition, Australia remains deeply concerned by the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situations in Afghanistan.

Australia continues to allocate mine action funding with an emphasis, where possible, on supporting stability, prosperity, and resilience in the Indo-Pacific region in line with Australia's COVID-19 development response, *Partnerships for Recovery*. Australia continues its longstanding support for international agencies working across various areas of mine action, including the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), UNMAS, UNDP and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition. Australia also continues to support mine action activities in Cambodia, Iraq, Palau, Sri Lanka, and Syria. Detailed information on Australian contributions can be accessed in the recently submitted Mine Ban Convention Annual Report for the 2021 calendar year.

1.2 European Union. The EU representative noted that the EU supports mine action all around the world, and at present supports 19 countries. Recently, the EU re-launched support for Bosnia Herzegovina, has started new projects in Kosovo and the South Caucasus, and has implemented new crisis response measures in Afghanistan (implemented by UNMAS).

1.3 Slovenia. Slovenia remains engaged with mine action, is hosting the ITF Enhancing Human Security, and will continue contributing to the ITF's mine action and victim assistance activities. In addition to the core support provided to the operations of the ITF, in 2021 Slovenia also contributed approximately EUR 400,000 to activities in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. It is expected that priorities will remain the same in 2022.

1.4 Ireland. Ireland currently has funding agreements with HALO Trust and MAG until the end of 2022 for work in five countries – Afghanistan, Colombia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. During 2022 an evaluation and review of the current programme will be conducted and the results of these will inform the multi-annual programming for 2023 and beyond. The Irish Embassy in Hanoi has a regional mine action programme, which in 2022 provides EUR 1.3 million to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.

1.5 United States. The representative of the USA was pleased to advise that the Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) budget of nearly US\$255 million for fiscal year 2022 had been approved by Congress, which was an increase of US\$21 million over last year's budget. The CWD program includes both Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) assistance and ammunition Physical

Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) assistance. Of the \$255 million total for CWD, it is anticipated spending of approximately \$213 million on HMA programs globally. While historically high, Congress was also more directive than ever with the 2022 budget, including about \$120 million in earmarks. This means some trade-offs had to be made, and while funding is increasing for some countries, at least one will have to scale-back. The increased assistance in 2022 includes: Angola (\$8.5m), Zimbabwe (\$3m), Cambodia (\$9m), Laos (\$45m), BiH (\$4.7m), Iraq (\$40m), Syria (7m) and the Caucuses (\$2m). Unfortunately support for Afghanistan has reduced by \$5 million down to \$15million.

On Ukraine, the ERW problem is both massive and urgent. The funding for Ukraine last year was \$8 million and it safe to assume that it will be larger this year. However, the US must balance demining assistance against other emergency needs. While equipment lists are important, addressing the current emergency in a more holistic approach is needed, including looking at boosting Ukrainian national capacity for EOD and humanitarian demining.

Finally, the US annual report *To Walk the Earth is Safety* was recently released and is available at the following link <https://www.state.gov/to-walk-the-earth-in-safety/>

1.6 Norway. Norway remains a strong supporter of mine action, and its funding level remains at EUR 30 million per year, with possibly extra funding this year for Ukraine. The main partner is Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA) with EUR17 million, and HALO and MAG with EUR 5 million each. Norway also supports HI, Article 36, GICHD, ICRC and local NGOs. In 2021 NPA pulled out of Colombia, but this year Norway is providing EUR1 million through the UNDP Country Fund. From 2022 onwards, Norway will be looking to implement multi-annual funding for partners – possibly up to 3 years duration and covering 18 countries. Norway is looking at creating more country coalitions, as they see this as an effective way to engage national authorities.

Ukraine is a high priority country, and Norway has provided support to mine action through HALO Trust for one year already. As of now, support through NPA has been to provide equipment. So far this year about EUR 1 million worth of equipment has been provided, in addition to about EUR 0.7 million to HALO Trust.

1.7 Italy. Italy noted that they will chair the MASG in 2023. Italy is currently developing a new mine action strategy, with support from the GICHD. Funding for mine action in 2022 will remain at the same level as 2021, at EUR 8.5 million.

1.8 France. In 2022 France will provide EUR 9 million for mine action. The funding will support three areas: protection/advocacy, training, and clearance. France has a focus on the Middle East, including Syria, Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, and the SAHEL. In Chad, support is provided to the Army Engineer Battalion and France, in the frame of a country coalition intends to finance a project of NGO HAMAP in the Mauritanian region of Nouadhibou. France has also provided EUR 500,000 to ANAMA (Azerbaijan - to buy detection equipment and tools kits). Support is given to demining schools, such as the regional school in Lebanon and to the National Demining School in Benin (CPADD). France supports EORE and mapping of mined areas in Ukraine with DRC (Danish Refugee Council) and is looking to increase support to Ukraine.

1.9 Switzerland. Switzerland continues to support mine action through its *Mine Action Strategy 2016 - 2022* and full details for 2021 are contained in the annual report that was issued on 4 April. In 2021 Switzerland provided a total of CHF17 million to clear mines, raise awareness, strengthen local capacities, and facilitate the implementation of the conventions. Switzerland supported mine action projects in 11 countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Syria, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe. Furthermore, Switzerland deployed 14 experts to five UN-led mine action programmes, namely in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, South Sudan, Sudan and Western Sahara as well as to UN headquarters in NY and Geneva. CHF9.5 million was provided as core support to the GICHD. At the beginning of 2022, the Swiss government adopted its first ever *Arms Control and Disarmament Strategy*, of which Mine Action forms an integral part. To implement these strategies, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) adopt a whole-of-government approach.

1.10 Sweden. The representative of Sweden said that the funding for Sida in 2022 was being reduced in favour of supporting Ukrainian refugees, in line with the rules established by OECD/DAC. They are still looking at the impact that this will have on mine action, but the funding level will certainly decrease. Sweden currently supports a programme implemented by Danish Refugee Council and Mines Advisory Group in 12 countries until June 2023, but funding will decrease. Sweden also supports UNMAS in Iraq and the mine action window in the UN Multi Partner Trust Fund for Post Conflict Colombia.

Final (as at 6 May 22)