



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(28 November – 1 December 2016)

Statement on Article 5 Implementation

Santiago, 29 November 2016

Mr. President,^{1 2}

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities³ involved in mine action.

Contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) remains endemic in many parts of the world. One of the great challenges facing the mine action community today is obtaining verified data regarding the nature and impact of mine and ERW contamination world-wide.

The prevalence of anti-personnel mines impedes economic and social activity, and adversely affects the wellbeing of communities. Safety and access are the key operative words in this context. Anti-personnel mines limit access to school for girls and boys, and inhibits access to livelihood for women and men. This ultimately denies local communities the opportunity to contribute to the sustainable development of their country.

Among the 26 countries and territories participating in the fourth round of the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine

¹ Heraldo Muñoz, Foreign Minister of Chile

² Members of Committee on Article 5 Implementation: Ireland (Chair), Costa Rica, Ecuador and Zambia.

³ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer).



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Action 2013-2018, 87 per cent of previously-identified hazardous areas have been released back to the community, but serious hazards remain.

There are currently 130 States Parties in compliance with their Article 5 Implementation obligations. A significant decrease in submissions of Extension Requests under Article 5 has also been witnessed, with merely two States Parties applying in 2016. Nevertheless, less than half (29) of the 61 States Parties that reported areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines have fulfilled their obligations under Article 5.

The United Nations is grateful for the report on the activities of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation. Echoing the report's observations, the United Nations would like to call upon States Parties to punctually submit their reports, as well as to employ the Guide to Reporting. This would considerably assist the Committee in measuring the progress and status of Article 5 Implementation.

The United Nations strives to support States Parties in fulfilling their Article 5 obligations. In Sudan, UNMAS has re-engaged, upon the request of the government, to assist in meeting such obligations. Gedaref State⁴ was announced free of known landmines in April 2016, and two more States are on track for December 2017. In Colombia, UNMAS assisted the National Mine Action Authority to develop a National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2016-2021, which seeks to contribute to peace-building efforts and the fulfilment of the country's obligation to remove all landmine contamination by 2021.

⁴ Gedaref State is located East of Sudan.



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In Guinea-Bissau, Jordan, Uganda, Zambia and most recently Mozambique, UNDP has assisted national governments to survey and clear known mined areas, and declare compliance with Article 5. Through its completion initiative, UNDP also assists governments to develop national capacities that will manage any residual risk from ERW.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where there are currently some 58 Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHA) remaining, UNMAS continues to assist the government to meet its obligation under Article 5 of the APMBC to reach completion by 1 January 2021.

The mine action community must explore how new technologies can accelerate the realization of a “2025 Mine-Free World”. Just a couple of weeks ago⁵, UNMAS and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining organized a workshop in Lyon, France, which brought together both mine action practitioners and technology developers. This forum offered discussion on how technological advances can significantly enhance humanitarian mine action response and provide valuable opportunities.

The UN System stands ready to support countries in meeting their Article 5 Implementation obligations and reaching the vision of a “2025 Mine-Free World”. The progress highlighted by the Committee and State Parties in their statements offers much promise that this vision can still materialize.

Thank you.

⁵ Mine Action Technology Workshop, 15-17 November.