



THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**24th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and
United Nations Advisers**

Mine Action Financing in Times of Scarcity

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Esteemed Chairman, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

initially, I find it extremely useful to discuss and share experiences on the subject at a time when it is assumed that government, non-governmental or donor financial budgets are redirected to finance unexpected activities in combating health and economic threats caused by this pandemic. In Croatia, unfortunately, we have also faced devastating earthquakes, the consequences of which are still being determined.

Still, I am very glad to inform you that the strong political will of the Croatian government to resolve the mine problem continues in this time of exceptional, unforeseen expenditures of the State. Thus, in 2020, the State budget allocated for demining was reduced by slightly less than 2 million EUR, i.e. by only 3,5% and the resources planned in 2021 are reduced by only 6% compared to resources secured and spent in 2020.

The Republic of Croatia, in spite of the fight with the pandemic and the consequences of the earthquake, has only slightly reduced the resources for demining and continues to monitor the rate of reducing mine hazardous areas, in accordance with international commitments and national strategy. Emphasizing the mentioned and due to its developed and above all formalised system, the Republic of Croatia does not reduce its financial engagement in other mine action activities either. This refers especially to the legally regulated rights of mine victims and their family members as well as the mine-risk education system. This has been formalised as the area of activity of the Civil Protection Directorate with full time employees conducting the educations.

Of course, we would like to do more and do it faster, but for a number of years Croatia has continuously complied with the annual plans for its mine action, primarily due to permanent and stable funding sources.

The largest share of mine action is financed from the state budget allocated to the Ministry of the Interior, and then through the operational programs of the European Union with the co-financing rate of 85%.

Finally, the third permanent source of mine action resources comes from the Ministry of Agriculture. This has been formalised with a bylaw, which stipulates that as much as 30% of forest tax is allocated to demining of forests and forest land.

To conclude, the stability of financing sources for mine action in Croatia is based on political will, high proportion of its own resources, extraordinary cross-sectorial cooperation and exceptional European Union contribution, reaching 40% of the annual budget for mine action in the years following accession.

Thank you!