



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(26-30 November 2018)

Article 5 Implementation

Madam President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action.¹

In its report to the Security Council on a **Comprehensive approach to mine action**,² the Secretary-General stressed that the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is ‘an important cornerstone of international humanitarian law’. Unfortunately, recent and ongoing conflicts continue to pose enormous dangers to civilians. Civilian casualties due to explosive devices continue to increase, so does contamination.

In that context, the **Maputo Action Plan** remains critical to our collective commitment to end the civilian suffering posed by mines, calling on States to conduct survey, risk education, and clearance operations. Mine Action also contributes to recreating the conditions needed for socio-economic opportunities, allows populations to return home safely, and to rebuild their lives and livelihood.

¹ 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).

² *Comprehensive Approach to Mine Action*, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2018/623.



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For example in South Sudan, following clearance activities, the communities reclaimed land for planting crops, and grazing livestock in order to deter further erosion of their resilience from ongoing conflict and increasing food insecurity.

In Lebanon, a recent study demonstrated that every dollar invested in the national mine clearance programme generated \$4.91 of socio-economic benefit.

In Cambodia, the National Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025 is entrenched in various national development strategies. The Royal Government of Cambodia has also shown firm commitment to the realization of SDG 18 '*Lives Safe from UXO*'.

Excellencies,

This year, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, Sudan, the United Kingdom, and Ukraine are submitting **extension requests** under Article 5. In its extension request, the Government of Bosnia Herzegovina lays out resource mobilization strategies linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. This will spur wider domestic and donor interest in mine action as an enabler for long-term development.

In Cyprus, progress has been achieved in humanitarian clearance in recent years. Mine action should continue to be considered as a confidence-building measure. The United Nations is committed to provide support to reach the goal of a mine-free Cyprus.

In relation to the extension request of Sudan, the Government has demonstrated a great commitment towards achieving completion. The operations in the Eastern States of Sudan are drawing to a close. The focus has moved to South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Teams are now deployed for survey and clearance, and their work will bring Sudan closer to fulfilling its obligations.



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2017 has recorded the **greatest financial support** provided to mine action since 1999 with donors and affected states contributing US\$771 million.³ The United Nations wishes to call on the international community to assist affected States approaching their deadline or who have submitted extensions, especially in the often forgotten, less-contaminated regions. Your timely attention and support to those affected States may make the difference. The Democratic Republic of Congo is a case in point and since their extension request in 2014, the country has made serious efforts towards its obligations. Donor support remains critical to facilitate clearance completion by 2021.

The United Nations welcomes the submission by the State of Palestine of its initial report after acceding to the Convention last year, and its ambition in achieving a mine-free Palestine by 2020. Timely reporting is invaluable to build trust and receive appropriate support.

The United Nations would like to reiterate its support to the **‘individualized approach’** and stands ready at both the global and country levels in facilitating exchange between States.

The new **Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action**⁴ will guide the efforts of the UN for the next five years in supporting affected countries to fulfill their international obligations. Together we can achieve a world free from the threat of mines and other explosive devices, where communities live in a safe environment conducive to sustainable peace and development.

Thank you.

³ International Campaign to Ban Landmines; 2018 Landmine Monitor Report; November 2018.

⁴ The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2019-2023.