

## BACKGROUND NOTE

*Draft version of 17 June*

### *On the Right Track? Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Mine Action*

Date and time: 23 June 2022, 16:15 – 17:30 (CEST, Geneva time)

Chair: **Mr. Bruno Donat**, Chief, UNMAS Geneva

Speakers: **Maitre Sudi Kimputu**, National Coordinator, Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines

**Marta Helena Lopez**, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources

**Shireen Dodson**, Assistant Secretary-General and United Nations Ombudsman

**Hayashi Akihito**, Specialist Japanese International Cooperation Agency, Cambodian Mine Action Centre

**Clement Suwali**, HMA Operations Manager, Danish Refugee Council South Sudan

### **Introduction**

Equality, diversity and inclusion cannot be reduced to one component. All forms of inequality reinforce each other, and all forms must be acknowledged and relentlessly fought against. An intersectional approach ensures that communities are inclusive of differences, working together towards real equality. An intersectional approach in mine action prevents combating one form of discrimination at the expense of another.

According to the United Nations Secretary-General, racial discrimination demands action every day, at every level, in every society. Inspired by this call for global engagement to understand and address the way racism and discrimination manifest themselves in the work environment, some colleagues from the Mine Action sector are advocating for enhanced inclusion. This event is a follow-up to the plenary session organized last year at the NDM-UN24 on “Inclusion and Diversity: Racial Equity in Mine Action.” It offered a space for an initial exchange and open dialogue on inclusion, diversity, and racial equity in the mine action sector.

Since NDM-UN24, there have been many initiatives taken by the several to continue the dialogue. The Strategic Action Plan<sup>1</sup> on addressing racism by the UN Secretary-General defines racism through institutional and personal aspects, which is a big step forward for the Organisation. However, the conversation about discrimination does not end there. Organisations

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat

still are taking initiatives to achieve racial equity and disability inclusion in the workplace. Focus should be paid on addressing the resistance from people who do not want equity and inclusion from within the UN.

Additionally, in the Secretary-General's Report on Assistance in mine action (A/76/283) of 10 August 2021, he highlighted the discussion of NDM-UN24, "[The United Nations] welcomes progress made by the mine action community to deepen discussions in this area, including through a dedicated plenary discussion on racial equity in the mine action sector during the International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers in May 2021. The Secretary-General is confident that next steps will complement the initiatives of the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations, which he launched in 2020." The goal of the EDI Plenary at NDM-UN25 would be to continue the discussion and continue with the necessary next steps for the mine action community.

### **Purpose of the session**

The focus of this session is to reflect on the goals set in NDM-UN24 and continue the conversation around successes and challenges faced. The previous session focused on promoting racial equity in the mine action sector and implementing measures to ensure a more diverse workforce in mine action. The mine action sector should stay focused on fighting racism and inequality, while broadening our scope through an intersectional lense to include disability and gender to the dialogue. Together speakers will champion the successes made and highlight the room for growth throughout the mine action sector. This is done through speakers that represent stakeholders at all levels of mine action.

We acknowledge that discussing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in a meaningful way can make the more privileged of us feel uncomfortable. As noted by Jerry White, co-founder of the Landmine Survivors Network "*Uncomfortable? Fine with us.*"

We would also like to access Slido, surveys and Zoom Q&A to get feedback from the audience.

### **Format for the Plenary: (60 minutes)**

Introductory remarks by Chair, and	08 Minutes
Interaction with room by Slido	03 Minutes
Presentation by Speaker 1/2	08 Minutes
Presentation by Speaker 3	08 Minutes
Presentation by Speaker 4	08 Minutes
Presentation by Speaker 5	08 Minutes

Q & A

12 minutes

Closing remarks by the Chair

05 minutes