



Check Against Delivery

United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: 20th Meeting of the States Parties

[Statement under agenda item 8 – General Exchange of Views]

Geneva, 21 - 25 November 2022

Delivered by Ms. Oksana Leshchenko of UNDP on 25 November 2022

Mr. President,¹

On behalf of the UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)², I would like to commend you for effectively steering the work of the Convention in such challenging times.

Distinguished delegates,

Since the Convention came into force, we have come a long way towards reaching the goal of a mine-free world: millions of antipersonnel mines have been destroyed, countless square kilometers of land have been cleared, and dozens of

¹ H.E. Ambassador Alvaro Enrique Ayala Melendez, Chargé d'Affaires, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations in Geneva, President of the Twentieth Meeting of the States Parties (20MSP).

² The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.



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States Parties have completed their mine clearance obligations. It is thanks to the States Parties to this Convention that a strong norm against anti-personnel mines has been established.

Despite these achievements, the impact of explosive ordnance continues to have devastating effects worldwide as described in past days and especially during our exchange on victim assistance. The UN is concerned about an increasing number of incidents involving mines and explosive ordnance in Ukraine in 2022, particularly in areas where Ukraine recently regained control. Since the escalation of the conflict in February, hundreds more civilians have been killed, injured or maimed due to accidents involving explosive ordnance. Accidents involving farmers trying to get back to their land are becoming increasingly common with negative consequences for agriculture and food security. Together with our partners in the Mine Action Sub-Cluster coordinated by UNDP, the UN has reached more than 3 million people with critical information about the risk of mines, in addition to demining and providing services to support survivors.

However, much more support is needed to address the needs and uphold the rights of explosive ordnance victims not only in Ukraine but also in 17 protracted emergencies caused by armed conflicts. In Nigeria, there has been continued use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, oftentimes placed on paths and roads used between communities, indiscriminately killing and injuring civilians including women and children.



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The United Nations calls on all States to accede to this Convention without delay, and on all parties to conflict to immediately stop using these indiscriminate weapons.

Distinguished delegates,

The United Nations urges all States Parties to allocate and prioritize resources for mine clearance to make sure that these devices stop causing casualties, stop hindering access to farmland, essential services and livelihoods, stop slowing reconstruction, and stop deterring internally displaced persons and refugees from returning home.

On behalf of the IACG-MA, I applaud the National Mine Action Authority of Sudan for submitting a comprehensive Article 5 extension request. The request indicates strong national ownership, complementarity, and best practices for advancing Sudan towards completion. It also highlights access and resources challenges which need to be addressed. It entails the plan for nurturing sustainable national response capability for effectively managing the explosive ordnance residual risk beyond completion. UNMAS looks forward to continuing to support Sudan to achieve these goals.



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Excellencies,

Before the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, a mine free world seemed inconceivable. Yet, collectively, the international community has begun to quite literally clear the road for humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development efforts. Let us take inspiration from past progress and let us continue down this road to rid the world of the scourge of landmines once and for all.

Thank you.

END