

## **BACKGROUND NOTE**

### **Plenary Session II. Novel approaches in mine action.**

- Date and time: Tuesday, 25 May 2021, 5:30p.m. – 6:30p.m. (CEST)
- Chair: **H. E. Robbert Jan Gabriëlse**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva
- Speakers: **Mr. Erik Tollefsen**, Head, Weapon Contamination Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross  
**Ms. Martha Isabel Hurtado Granada**, Coordinadora, Grupo de Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal, Colombia  
**Ms. Tammy Hall**, Head, Standards and Operations, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining  
**Ms. Abigail Hartley**, on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (UNMAS)  
**Dr. José Schulz**, Head of Division of Humanitarian Assistance - Operations, German Federal Foreign Office

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### **Introduction**

The mine action sector has significantly evolved in the past two decades. This has been, in large part, a consequence of the evolving normative framework – entry into force of the APMBC, the CCM, and Protocol V of the CCW, and the continuing development of international mine action standards (IMAS) – as well as of the changing nature of conflict and, consequently, of the operational context. In these two decades, innovation – both in technology and approach – has played a key role in ensuring that national authorities and other stakeholders are appropriately equipped to address the challenges posed by explosive ordnance, “old” and “new”, in an efficient and effective manner.

As the operating landscape continues to change – with conflicts increasingly protracted and fragmented; the growth of contamination in complex urban environments; competing priorities for international assistance – the mine action community is, once again, called upon to look at ways in which innovation can help us stay the course and ensure perseverance towards the achievement of globally agreed commitments.

### **Purpose of the Session**

This panel aims to stimulate a broad reflection on ways in which innovation – in both technology and approach – can assist in completion of outstanding mine action objectives. The panel includes

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diverse stakeholders, who will address issues such as: the role of new technologies and innovative forms of collaboration to foster more inclusive and effective workforces; the specificities of urban contamination and ways to address it; cross-pollination of technology between sectors and their use to speed up survey and clearance; the role of regional approaches and cross-border challenges; and novel ways of collecting and leveraging data to ensure transparency, accountability and data driven decision making in mine action. The speakers will draw upon a variety of geographical examples including Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, the Sahel, Somalia and Syria.

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

Introductory remarks by Chair	05 minutes
Presentation by Mr. Erik Tollefsen	07 minutes
Presentation by Ms. Martha Isabel Hurtado Granada	07 minutes
Presentation by Ms. Tammy Hall	07 minutes
Presentation by Ms. Abigail Hartley	07 minutes
Presentation by Mr. José Schulz	07 minutes
Discussion and Q & A	15 minutes
Closing remarks by the Chair	05 minutes

### **Guiding Questions**

- What novel approaches and technological advances have emerged in recent years which could benefit the mine action sector?
- What innovative solutions can help to address the specific challenges posed by contamination in urban environments? Could these be replicated to benefit the wider mine action sector?
- What new approaches have we seen in data collection and how can data be leveraged in novel ways to increase accountability and impact in mine action?