



## **United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**

### **Sixteenth Conference of High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II on mines, booby-traps and other devices to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons**

#### **AP II: Statement under General Exchange of Views**

**Wednesday, 12 November 2014**

*Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)*

Madam President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action<sup>1</sup> (IACG-MA), comprising 14 United Nations entities involved in mine action.

On behalf of the IACG-MA, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

Landmines, booby-traps and other devices, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs), continue to kill and injure civilians including long after the cessation of hostilities. The United Nations witnesses the devastating impact of these devices every day, especially where peace operations are deployed in countries like Afghanistan, Mali and Somalia, just to name a few.

In Mali, since the establishment of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in April 2013, the peacekeeping mission has recorded that no less than 118 people have been killed, both civilians and peacekeepers. In response, UNMAS trains, equips, mentors and advises national authorities as well as police- and troop-contributors to peace operations across a wide-range of explosive hazard management, including weapons, and ammunition stockpile management.

In addition, the United Nations supports Governments, including police and military personnel by providing awareness training and technical expertise to help mitigate the threats

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<sup>1</sup> The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer status), and the World Bank (Observer status).

posed by these devices. For instance, in Myanmar, Nepal and Syria, among others, UNICEF also contributes to protecting civilians from the effects of IEDs, specifically through government-driven national education projects that include IED risk education training.

United Nations entities work together hand in hand to protect rights, to protect civilians, and support the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is also important to know that the United Nations' commitment to support discussions on IEDs within the framework of Amended Protocol II is maintained, and it looks forward to strengthening its support to the Group of Experts. In addition, UNMAS will continue, for instance, to provide High Contracting Parties, at their request, with technical expertise, lessons learnt, good practices, as well as shared experience acquired in many affected countries.

We would like also to use this opportunity to reiterate the United Nations consistent support to building and maintaining constructive and fruitful partnerships with civil society organizations. In this context, it is noteworthy to recall the words of the Secretary-General of the United Nations when, in March 2013, he indicated that a free and independent civil society “brings vital issues to our attention. They help us make the case for stronger protection of human rights”. On a different occasion, the Secretary-General stressed that “expanding and deepening the relationship with non-governmental organizations will further strengthen both the United Nations and the intergovernmental debate on issues of global importance.” In this very multilateral forum where sensitive security and humanitarian matters are discussed, NGOs contribute useful expertise, knowledge and support the efforts of the international community to resolve complex issues. Civil society organizations' input and participation in the CCW multilateral deliberations do complement usefully contributions of the United Nations.

Lastly, the United Nations welcomes the accession of Iraq to this treaty. Committing to the provisions of Amended Protocol II, some of which can be challenging to implement, also brings the legitimate expectation of a High Contracting Party to benefit from the provisions of Article 11 on technical assistance and cooperation. Against this background, the United Nations calls on High Contracting Parties to assist Iraq in the effective and early implementation of Amended Protocol II.

Thank you.