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United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(19 – 21 June 2023)

Statement on Article 5 Implementation
Delivered by Mr. Richard Boulter, UNMAS

Geneva, 21 June 2023

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee,

This statement is delivered on behalf of the UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action¹.

In countries where the United Nations has a mine action presence, the Organization is focusing on protecting people from explosive ordnance and building the capacity of national authorities to meet their Article 5 obligations.

For example, UNMAS supported the **Somalia** Explosive Management Authority in developing the Action Plan submitted to the Committee on Article 5 implementation in April this year. The Plan aims to achieve several milestones by October 2027, in particular the identification of hazardous areas through non-technical survey in accessible areas while carrying out clearance of confirmed hazardous areas. UNMAS is deploying eight non-technical survey teams, 14 risk education teams, and four clearance teams to support implementation of the Plan.

¹ 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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In **Nigeria**, the operating environment remains volatile, particularly in Borno State, where attacks by non-state armed groups and the presence of explosive ordnance remnants of war and landmines, particularly landmines of an improvised nature, make major supply routes dangerous for civilians and humanitarian workers. To address the challenge posed by a lack of information on suspected and confirmed hazardous areas, UNMAS produces maps identifying where explosive ordnance incidents have taken place and shares these with the Government, the UN and humanitarian actors for their planning purposes.

In **Ethiopia**, where UNMAS has been supporting national mine action authorities, we look forward to the accreditation of an increased number of mine action operators to facilitate clearance and help the Government to meet its Article 5 deadline of December 2025.

Both **Thailand and Cambodia** are getting close to completing their clearance obligations (Cambodia by December 2025 and Thailand by December 2026). We encourage both countries to find a solution to the clearance of their common border.

While much progress has been made, I regret to inform that in **Yemen**, which continues to face one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, UNDP will be forced to reduce its mine action interventions by the end of June due to lack of funding. Given the scale of the contamination, significant support will be needed for the country to meet its Article 5 obligations by 2028. An improvement of the security situation in Yemen is required to allow for a nationwide survey of suspected hazardous areas to design a cost-effective intervention.

In **Sudan and Ukraine**, protracted hostilities and the wide array of weaponry in use have undone years of clearance progress and brought new contamination that will pose challenges for



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years to come. In Sudan, the recent fighting has left unexploded ordnance in Khartoum and other urban areas. In that country, the Humanitarian Response Plan calls for 16.5 million US dollars to fund community liaison, technical assessments, clearance, risk education and victim assistance in the newly and existing contaminated areas.

Several State Parties are yet to identify all the areas under their jurisdiction or control where antipersonnel mines are known or suspected. For example, in its transparency report submitted in April this year, **Iraq** reported the need for increased survey to identify anti-personnel mine contamination. We hope that the Government of Iraq will make appropriate budget allocations to mine action in the coming years.

To conclude, effective data collection and information management to identify hazardous areas and robust strategic planning to lead and coordinate operations are central to progress towards Article 5 implementation. Together with mine action stakeholders and the technical support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, UNMAS oversees the development of international mine action standards to improve the procedures, norms and practices of mine action. IMAS are an effective tool for establishing programmes, planning, procurement, management of contracts, accreditation, clearance, evaluation and much more. Please use them to your advantage.

With strong political will, security, access, funding, capacity and expertise, we can make progress towards the well-being of affected communities and international obligations.