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United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Statement under agenda item 10 (d) - Risk Reduction Education

Geneva, 17 September 2025

Delivered by UNMAS

Mr. President,¹

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the United Nations entities involved in mine action.²

Excellencies,

The Lausanne Action Plan emphasizes the importance of risk education as part of a comprehensive approach to mine action. Collaboration and innovation are improving the impact of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and reducing risk in affected communities. Various UN entities are working in partnership with local and international actors to raise awareness of explosive hazards and promote behaviour change among vulnerable and displaced populations.

With support from generous donors, UNMAS provided tailored outreach in Abyei, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Libya, Mali, and Syria, using plays, videos,

¹ Ambassador Carlos D. Sorreta, Permanent Representative of the Philippines.

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) is an observer.



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community liaison officers, and local awareness raisers to reach children, nomadic groups, refugees, and remote communities. In Yemen, UNICEF reached over 1.7 million people through mass media, school programmes, and disability-inclusive messaging, including sign language. UNDP supported awareness efforts in Syria through community liaison techniques, while UNHCR used digital platforms in Lebanon and Ukraine to share safety information with displaced populations. UNMAS and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are also increasing the safety of displaced populations through the incorporation of risk education in camp coordination and camp management activities, with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

In active conflict environments such as Lebanon and Ukraine, EORE is combined with Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) training, which seeks to empower civilians with the knowledge and tools they need to better prepare and protect themselves against explosive weapons and other conflict-related threats.

Children are disproportionately killed and injured by cluster munitions, not only because of their curiosity and play, but also because their lower centre of gravity is closer to an explosive blast. In Afghanistan, South Sudan and Syria, where cluster munition remnants remain a persistent threat, up to 80% of explosive ordnance accident victims are children. Support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in South Sudan is combatting this reality, and empowering UNMAS, UNICEF and the National Mine Action Authority to develop age-appropriate EORE materials.

Farmers and herding communities are also particularly at risk of accidents. UNMAS and FAO are collaborating to reach them more systematically. The Farmer Field Schools run by FAO will be used as a platform to deliver risk education.



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Risk education is crucial and rapidly deployable in challenging and fast changing contexts like Gaza and the West Bank, especially amid funding challenges for clearance operations. We must work together to sustain these efforts.

The EORE Advisory Group is a powerful forum to disseminate best practices. The group, co-led by UNICEF and a rotating NGO, with the GICHD as secretariat, has proven its ability to effectively serve the mine action community and mobilize other partners and sectors. The group has recently released a report which, among other things, describes progress in the risk education sector over the last two years, with a specific focus on outcomes achieved, as well as future sector needs and suggestions. We encourage all interested parties to read it.

We welcome the fact that Afghanistan, Lebanon, Mauritania and Somalia have included detailed and costed plan for risk education in their extension requests.

The sad fact that 50 people are killed or maimed by EO each month in Afghanistan, illustrates the need for continued risk education. This is vital to protect people returning home, collecting humanitarian aid, working the fields, travelling to markets, or children at play.

Thank you.

END