



UNMAS

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Annual Report 2016

The UNMAS Annual Report 2016
describes the organization's activities and
achievements resulting from contributions to the
United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for
Assistance in Mine Action.

Please see reverse for an overview of
UNMAS work in United Nations peacekeeping and
special political missions in 2016.



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UNMAS United Nations

Cover photo:
A deep buried bomb, weighing almost one ton,
is removed from a site in Gaza.
UNMAS Palestine

CONTENTS

- ACRONYMS2
- CONTRIBUTORS3
- MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL4
- MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR5
- THE UNITED NATIONS COORDINATOR OF MINE ACTION.....6
- IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
ON MINE ACTION 2013-2018 12
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE: Risks to individuals and the
socio-economic impacts of mines and explosive remnants of war,
including cluster munitions, are reduced 12
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO: Comprehensive support is provided by
national and international actors to mine and explosive remnants of
war victims within broader responses to injury and disability 21
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE: The transfer of mine action functions
to national actors is accelerated, with national capacity to fulfil
mine action responsibilities increased 24
 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR: Mine action is promoted and
integrated in multilateral instruments and frameworks as well as
national plans and legislation..... 26
- RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DONOR RELATIONS 30
- UNMAS 2016 SNAPSHOT 35

ACRONYMS

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AU	African Union
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DMAC	Directorate of Mine Action Coordination
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
IACG-MA	Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
IDP	Internally displaced person
IED	Improvised explosive device
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LibMAC	Libyan Mine Action Centre
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MASG	Mine Action Support Group
MEIFCS	Mine and ERW Impact-Free Community Survey
MTT	Multi-task teams
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NTS	Non-technical survey
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PoC	Protection of civilians
RRTSC	Rapid Response and Technical Support Capacity
SHF	Sudan Humanitarian Fund
UN VTF	United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNMACA	United Nations Mine Action Centre of Afghanistan
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
WAM	Weapons and Ammunition Management
WHO	World Health Organization

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Italy



Poland



United Kingdom



Denmark



Japan



Republic of Korea



United States



European Union



Liechtenstein



Country-based Pool Fund (CBPF)



UNA - Sweden

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

During my ten years in office I have seen, time and again, the vital contribution of the United Nations Mine Action Service in realizing the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter: saving people from the scourge of war; safeguarding equal rights; and promoting a better quality of life.

In conflict-affected countries, UNMAS facilitates the safe deployment and effective implementation of the United Nations emergency response, allowing humanitarians to reach people in need through clearance of explosive hazards. These include, more and more often, deadly improvised explosive devices deployed specifically to kill and injure civilians.

This year, at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, I was proud to join forces with the United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, Mr. Daniel Craig, to emphasize the indispensability of mine action to humanitarian action.

As the world works to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must be aware that countries contaminated with explosive hazards face severe impediments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. UNMAS provides safe space to undertake development and reconstruction activities, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace.

This year, I again bestowed a Secretary-General Award to UNMAS, this time in the category of courage. I commend the performance, bravery and spirit of the UNMAS team in Gaza, who put their lives at risk defusing, by hand, over 90 aircraft bombs buried deep in the ground.

As UNMAS prepares to mark its 20th anniversary in 2017, I applaud its needs driven, people-centred work to ensure limited resources are utilized to maximum benefit.

I commend the men and the increasing number of women working for UNMAS, on the frontlines of humanitarian emergencies and peace operations. I call on Member States to continue to engage and advocate for public and private support for this critical United Nations service provider.

I am confident that Secretary-General António Guterres and his team will be as impressed as I have been by the dedication of UNMAS staff around the world and the difference their work can make on the ground. I will proudly pass on to my successor the wisdom I received from former Secretary-General Kofi Annan: “UNMAS is one of the most precious resources of the United Nations.”

Let us continue to support them vocally, politically and financially.



UN Photo/Mark Garten

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As conflicts rage across the world and the threats posed by explosive hazards perpetuate humanitarian crises and hinder emergency response, UNMAS leadership is needed more than ever.

Repeatedly and consistently, mine action has proven critical to humanitarian action. This, and the crucial coordination role of UNMAS, was widely recognised at the World Humanitarian Summit, and in the outcome documents, by affected states, donor nations, United Nations entities and civil society. Mine action is also a vital stabilization enabler, facilitating the recovery of communities impacted by conflict. As Iraqis work to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of Da'esh, mine action efforts are needed for their safe return and ensure that schools, hospitals and infrastructure are open and accessible.

UNMAS is providing high quality services specialised advice across continents. The trust and confidence affected states and donor nations have placed in this Service are evident; requests for assistance persist, from Cameroon and Ukraine to name but a few. For the second consecutive year, donor contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action have increased. However, though the fund grew by 21 per cent in 2016, there is a need for increased levels of core funding to support UNMAS operations as the number of programmes continues to grow.

Such trust is not misplaced. As you will see in this report, UNMAS is effectively leading, shaping and guiding mine action globally; consistently delivering tangible results in both technical response and policy development. UNMAS work is underpinned by careful and strategic planning supported by robust monitoring and evaluation. The quality of work is constantly improving.

UNMAS goes into its twentieth year stronger and more effective than ever before; fit for purpose to respond to the needs of millions of people impacted by conflict. I take great pride in directing this Service and commend the work of all my colleagues.



UN Photo/Mark Garten

THE UNITED NATIONS COORDINATOR OF MINE ACTION

UNMAS coordination remained in demand and strengthened throughout 2016.

Drawing on experience gained and lessons learned from twenty years of mine action driven by needs and centred on people, UNMAS led and coordinated the sector's response to ongoing and emerging threats.

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE (IED) THREAT MITIGATION

IED threat mitigation has emerged as an acute and urgent humanitarian need, particularly in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Somalia and Syria which have seen increased and intensified use of these weapons. IEDs have a devastating impact on

UNMAS INITIATIVES IN IED THREAT MITIGATION:

- Elaboration of DPKO/DFS Guidelines on IED Threat Mitigation in Mission Settings
- Initiation of IED Disposal (IEDD) Standards development with technical inputs of Member States
- Inclusion of victims of IEDs in the updated United Nations Policy on Victim Assistance
- Publication of an IED Lexicon, the first of its kind for civilian use
- Launch of an online IED hub (www.unmas.org)
- Inclusion of the threats posed by IEDs in the Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Safety Handbook and App
- Training of thousands of peacekeepers (uniformed and civilian), national security forces, humanitarian workers and civilians in IED recognition, reporting and awareness
- Strengthening of synergies and partnerships through cooperation and expertise-sharing with the African Union and NATO



UNMAS Chief of Programme Management Mr. Paul Heslop briefs the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on UNMAS initiatives to mitigate the threats posed by Improvised Explosive Devices.
Photo: UNMAS/Larisa Khiryanova

civilians as well as on the safety and security of United Nations personnel, peacekeepers, and humanitarian workers. Their impact is of increasing concern to Member States. For the first time, a resolution on Countering the Threat posed by IEDs was adopted by the General Assembly at the end of 2015. The resolution recognised and referenced the role of UNMAS in IED response.

UNMAS is in a unique position to bridge peace and security, humanitarian and development sectors. Its experience and technical strength established it firmly at the forefront of the United Nations IED threat mitigation. Throughout the year, UNMAS advice, training and guidance have been requested by affected states, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), peacekeeping troop contributing countries, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), think-tanks and NGOs.

UNMAS initiatives were acknowledged by the Secretary-General in his 2016 report to the General Assembly on Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices.

INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP ON MINE ACTION

In its capacity as Chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), UNMAS continued to coordinate the United Nations response to world-wide mine action needs. The evolving situations in Colombia, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria and Yemen were closely monitored. UNMAS conducted an inter-agency (UNDP, UNICEF, UNMAS) mission to Ukraine, assessed the impact of contamination in that country, the requirements of the national authority to be able to respond effectively, and also identified how the United Nations could most effectively assist.

UNMAS coordinated over 30 United Nations statements delivered at the meetings of states parties to relevant instruments including the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in September, the Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine

Ban Convention (APMBC) in late November/December and the Fifth Review Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in December. In the statements the United Nations denounced the unacceptable humanitarian impact of these prohibited devices and called for greater adherence to, and implementation of, the provisions of each convention. Furthermore, in August, UNMAS participated for the first time in a meeting of the Arms Trade Treaty during the Second Conference of States Parties in Geneva, highlighting UNMAS achievements in linking strong weapons and ammunition management to adherence of international standards.

STRATEGY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON MINE ACTION 2013-2018

UNMAS continued to coordinate, through the IACG-MA, the implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Mechanism of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. Since the successful launch of the M&E Mechanism in July 2014, five rounds of data collection have been completed and all reports are available online at www.mineaction.org. During 2016 the participation of United Nations mine action entities in the M&E Mechanism grew to 71 per cent from 53 per cent last year. Data and analysis from the M&E Mechanism informed IACG-MA decision-making in programmatic improvements and strengthened advocacy through treaty meeting statements and presentations such as those made during the 19th annual meeting of the mine action sector in February and to the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) meetings in February and October. The M&E unit also provided technical advice and support to IACG-MA members and national authorities to improve reporting, expand M&E activities, and develop country-specific analysis. The M&E Mechanism is funded through the continued generous support of Australia, Denmark and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

PORTFOLIO OF MINE ACTION PROJECTS

The 2016 United Nations Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, coordinated by UNMAS, was launched in Geneva in February. The Portfolio is a unique online

resource for donors, policymakers and mine action operators which provides a dynamic snapshot of the needs and priorities for 23 countries and territories affected by mines and other explosive hazards. Its purpose is to serve as a reliable source of the most relevant and recent information on mine action programmes around the world. Mine action programmes across Africa, Asia, Europe the Middle East and South America submitted 155 projects ranging from the clearance of IEDs to risk awareness for children, capacity development of national institutions and socio-economic rehabilitation for survivors. The Portfolio is available at <http://www.mineaction.org/resources/portfolios> and includes interactive visual elements, such as graphs and charts, summarising needs according to country, region and area of work.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF NATIONAL MINE ACTION PROGRAMME DIRECTORS AND UNITED NATIONS ADVISERS

In February 2016, UNMAS convened the international meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations

Advisers where practitioners, donors, affected states, United Nations entities and civil society come together to discuss issues of relevance to the operationalization of mine action. The annual meeting provides an opportunity for the mine action community to review and exchange on challenges and progress, best practices and lessons learnt. This year's meeting, held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva gathered a record number of delegates with over 500 participants. The meeting was field-focussed providing a fora for exchanges on challenges, lessons learned, and application of best practices centred on the theme "Mine Action is Humanitarian Action".

WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

UNMAS carried the message that "Mine Action is Humanitarian Action" to the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul in May 2016. Through its participation in the opening ceremony, round table discussions and the commitments plenary, UNMAS demonstrated how mine action actively contributes to the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity, reiterated the importance of upholding international humanitarian law, and



Observation of a minutes silence at the opening ceremony of the 19th International Meeting of Mine Action National Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers, Palais des Nations, Geneva. From left: Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions Mr. Dmitry Titov; UNMAS Director Ms. Agnès Marcaillou; Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva Mr. Michael Møller; Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining Ambassador Stefano Toscano. Photo: JIN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré



The UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards Mr. Daniel Craig addresses the opening ceremony of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey.
Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

confirmed ‘protection’ as a core component of mine action.

Mr. Daniel Craig, the United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, participated as a special guest of the United Nations Secretary-General to raise

the profile of mine action at the Summit. Watched by the world, Mr. Craig’s presence lent considerable support to underscoring the criticality of mine action to effective humanitarian response.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR MINE AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE IN MINE ACTION

UNMAS continued to raise the significance of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (4 April). This year UNMAS activities were organized under the theme “Mine Action is Humanitarian Action” highlighting the humanitarian impact of mine action through the protection of civilians and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance.

At United Nations Headquarters, UNMAS organized a photography exhibition featuring its work in Afghanistan, Cyprus and South Sudan. It showed in a visually impactful way how explosive hazards block the delivery of humanitarian assistance,

UNMAS COMMITMENTS AT THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

- Implementation of the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Humanity
- Greater efficiency, greater transparency, and greater innovation
- Putting “protection” at the centre of its work
- Being driven by the needs of affected people and communities
- Being a voice for girls, women, boys and men who are victims of explosive hazards

prevent children from going to school, stop farmers from working their land, render water points and places of worship inaccessible and hamper reconstruction efforts. The six week long exhibition was seen by over 100,000 visitors. In addition, the UNMAS Director and the Global Advocate briefed the press and reiterated the Secretary-General's clear message that *"Mine action is an investment in humanity...help[ing] nurture peaceful societies, where those in need can receive aid, and refugees and internally displaced persons can safely return home, and children can go to school."* Later in the week, over 1,000 people participated in the Rotary Club 5 kilometre "Runway Run" at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York to raise awareness about mine action.

In Geneva, UNMAS inaugurated a multimedia exhibit in the Palais des Nations in the presence of representatives from the mine action community,

Member States, the United Nations and Geneva-based students. The display area was divided into five sections, each illustrating one of the mine action pillars. There was a photo exhibit showcasing victim assistance; a risk education area where questions could be addressed to UNMAS personnel in the field; a digital minefield where audio guided tours took place simulating the experience of walking through a minefield and demonstrating the importance of clearance and stockpile destruction; and a daily interactive Skype discussion with different UNMAS programmes, throughout the week. With the support of Ville de Genève, UNMAS, for the first time, displayed four UNMAS banners on the prominent Mont Blanc bridge in the city centre.

UNMAS country programmes also marked 4 April with a variety of events and activities emphasizing inclusiveness, sports, and art. For example, in Abyei,



The UN Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards Mr. Daniel Craig demonstrates mine detector use at the opening reception of photographic exhibition "Mine Action is Humanitarian Action," organized on International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action at the UNHQ. From left: Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Jan Eliasson, Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mr. Mark Rutte; UN Global Advocate Mr. Daniel Craig; Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations Mr. Mahmud Saikal. Photo: UN Photo/Manuel Elias



Students celebrate International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action in Juba, South Sudan. UN Photo/JC McIlwaine

Colombia and Darfur, there were mini-marathons. In the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, famous local musicians gave

free concerts. In Lebanon, a “Beirut by Bike” event was held and in Mali, sports events were organized with the disabled sporting federation.

UNMAS ADVOCATES FOR SEQUENCING OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION AT THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER ANNUAL RETREAT

During the two-day Global Protection Cluster (GPC) Annual Retreat, UNMAS continued to advocate for the inclusion of mine action in humanitarian action and its critical role in delivering an effective, efficient and safe response. Presenting under the segment “Integrated Protection Programming”, UNMAS emphasized the importance of a “sequenced” approach to humanitarian action, in particular where explosive hazards continue to hinder the delivery of basic humanitarian assistance. UNMAS representatives from South Sudan highlighted the critical role of mine action work not only in contributing to the activities of the protection cluster but also to the humanitarian response of other clusters (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene [WASH], education, food security, etc.); inter alia, by facilitating access.

UNMAS further highlighted the importance of increasing female participation in its programmes including through a presentation on the UNMAS programme in Libya’s successful implementation of the “Gender Balanced Approach to Small Arms Control & Awareness to Strengthen Community Resilience in Libya” project, which emphasized the key role women play in educating male members of their societies and provided an example of successful remote management of activities in conflict-affected settings.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON MINE ACTION 2013-2018

UNMAS, together with other United Nations entities, is committed to implementing the objectives of the United Nations Strategy on Mine Action and reporting its progress through the M&E Mechanism.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE

Risks to individuals and the socio-economic impacts of mines and explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions, are reduced

UNMAS reduces the risks posed by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in three main ways: survey and clearance, risk education, and weapons and ammunition management.

SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

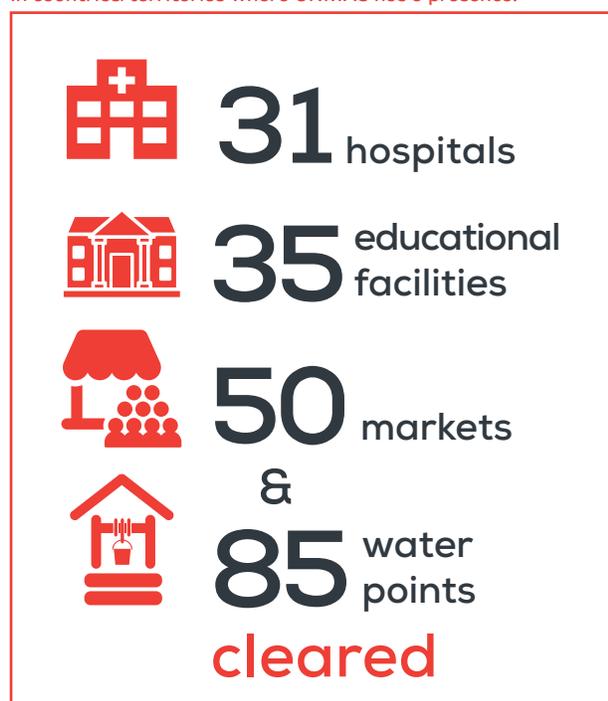
Survey, the systematic collection of mine-related information used to identify the scope of explosive hazard contamination in a given area, is the necessary first step before clearance can be carried out and is an integrated component of all UNMAS programmes. Clearance techniques vary widely

and include manual methods, the use of dogs, and mechanical approaches to detect, remove and dispose of explosive hazards in a safe manner.

Afghanistan remains one of the most explosive hazard contaminated countries globally reporting more victims annually than any other country, and the mine action programme is still one of the largest. UNMAS undertakes survey and clearance activities in support of the Government of Afghanistan in fulfilling their obligations under the APMBC, which commits the country to being mine-free by 2023. As part of this, UNMAS oversees the Mine and ERW Impact Free Community Survey (MEIFCS), a national village-by-village assessment of contaminated land. By the close of 2016, over 46,000 communities have been assessed by MEIFCS teams since the start of the survey in 2012, leading to 460 areas being confirmed as safe for community use. Clearance activities countrywide, coordinated by UNMAS in partnership with the government, removed hazards from 55 sq km of land – roughly twenty eight times the size of Monaco – and found and destroyed over 14,000 mines. This has restored valuable land to productive use, enabled the implementation of infrastructure projects, and saved lives and livelihoods of Afghans throughout the country.

In **Colombia**, the country with the world's second highest number of recorded mine/ERW accidents per year after Afghanistan, UNMAS conducted survey and clearance activities in some of the most heavily mine-impacted regions. With financial

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.



resources provided by UNMAS, HALO Trust conducted non-technical survey and clearance in the Antioquian municipalities of Abejorral and San Rafael, and Campaña Colombiana contra Minas, the first Colombian civilian demining operator to be established and accredited, deployed two non-technical survey teams in the municipality of Algeciras.

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, UNMAS cleared 8,500 items of ERW, mines, and rounds of small arms ammunition in the eastern and central parts of the country. Throughout the year, UNMAS responded to requests for explosive hazard removal, enabling freedom of movement for conflict-affected communities. Sixty-two per cent of recorded suspect hazardous areas have now been returned to communities and, subject to funding availability, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is expected to meet its APMBC obligations before the target date of 1 January 2021. In addition, in partnership with local service providers, UNMAS maintained the “Green Line”, which is a free phone line for civilians to report ERW.

While UNMAS work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is conducted mainly in rural areas, UNMAS work in **Gaza**, takes place in densely populated areas where UNMAS is clearing legacy ERW resulting from the 2014 conflict. Since UNMAS and local mine action partners have already cleared the majority of surface lying ERW in Gaza, much of the remaining ERW, including

unexploded aircraft bombs and tank shells are located underground or in building debris. In 2016, UNMAS cleared 54 deep-buried bomb sites and identified an additional 66 sites for clearance in 2017, enabling access to key infrastructure including schools.

UNMAS also continued to provide vital expertise to UN agencies working on reconstruction and rubble removal through risk assessments (250 undertaken this year), quality assurance, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). These activities enable the safe construction of houses, roads, public facilities, public parks, water wells and other infrastructure and enable safe return for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

In response to a request by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Government of **Iraq**, UNMAS established a presence in January 2016 to coordinate the response to an unprecedented amount of explosive hazard contamination. The scale and complexity of the issue is substantial and exceeds existing national capacities, especially since those who have the required knowledge and expertise are engaged on the front lines. The majority of items to be removed in areas recently impacted by the conflict are IEDs, requiring new methodologies, skills and innovation. UNMAS conducts emergency operations in areas retaken from Da’esh and teams have been operational since August in the city of Fallujah. In 2016, over 1,530,000 sq m of land was surveyed,

UNMAS COURAGE REWARDED FOR DEEP BURIED BOMB REMOVAL IN GAZA

The United Nations Secretary-General Awards recognize the outstanding work of United Nations staff who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to uphold the values of the United Nations in physically dangerous environments.

At this year’s awards ceremony on 25 October 2016, the Secretary-General recognized Mr. Mark Frankish, UNMAS Senior Explosive Ordnance Disposal Adviser and Mr. George Tan, UNMAS Operations Quality Assurance Officer for their work in Gaza.

During the 2014 conflict, over 70,000 explosive weapons were used with an estimated 7,000 items failing to explode as intended. UNMAS continues to clear these deep-buried ERW with a focus on technically challenging large aerial bombs. To safely dispose of these items, technical experts are sometimes required to climb down deep excavation shafts up to 11 metres below the ground; it is difficult and dangerous work that requires hours of intense concentration.

140 sites were cleared and over 280 ERWs and 255 IEDs were removed from critical infrastructure locations such as electricity, water and sewage plants, bridges, main roads within Fallujah and government office locations. In response to the situation in Mosul, and in support of the Government and UN plans, UNMAS dispatched a high-risk clearance team to Erbil which is ready to move rapidly into newly retaken areas as soon as the security situation is permissible. UNMAS has also deployed technical advisers to ensure safe movement on over 63 inter-agency UN assessment missions in newly retaken areas in Ninewah and Salah ah Din and has conducted threat assessments enabling food distribution points and IDP locations to be established.

In **Syria**, the pervasive use of large numbers of weapons, including cluster munitions and improvised devices, has resulted in a country-wide humanitarian crisis with 88 per cent of Syria's sub-districts identifying explosive hazards as a priority concern. UNMAS leads mine action activities

in Syria under the "Whole of Syria" approach, coordinating the work of 24 NGOs (international and local) to ensure those areas most impacted are reached and that activities are synchronised with the broader humanitarian response. To support data gathering and resulting prioritisation, in late 2016, UNMAS began a contamination impact survey in north-eastern Syria.

After decades of conflict in **South Sudan**, explosive hazards litter the country. More than 90 sq km of land remains contaminated, threatening communities and limiting socio-economic development. Nearly eight million people live in counties impacted by explosive hazards, which threaten lives and pose a barrier between communities and life-saving resources.

As a result of ongoing conflict, approximately 160 new hazards are being recorded each month. Following the work of 58 clearance teams funded by UNMAS, 27 km sq of land contaminated by explosive hazards has been returned to affected

INNOVATIVE MINE ACTION SOLUTIONS IN SYRIA

In Syria, "people are killed by explosives every day. I have to help with what I know. That is not a matter of choice." These are the words of Adeeb Ateeq, a volunteer now an expert in explosive hazard clearance and the founder of "NAS" organization. Adeeb Ateeq knows well the risks faced by Syrians; he was leading a small team in clearing contaminated land in Idleb when he stepped on the unexploded ordnance that severed his left leg.

The threat of unexploded ordnance is so pervasive in Syria that volunteers from local communities often attempt to carry out ad-hoc clearance despite lacking appropriate equipment, support, awareness, or the same background expertise as Adeeb. Syria still requires a comprehensive local clearance and risk education capacity as explosive threats continue to evolve and the intervention of the international community has been restricted by the ongoing conflict, the dire security situation and the lack of border access.

To address these challenges, UNMAS identified creativity in methodology and implementation, and partnerships with local Syrian NGOs as critical elements for a successful humanitarian intervention. UNMAS adopted an approach to utilise pyrotechnic torches, a non-explosive methodology for surface-level clearance especially of cluster munitions, which can be used by local non-technical operators in Syria.

The volunteers of the Syrian Civil Defense or "White Helmets", an organisation nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, made widespread use of this method throughout Idleb and Hama for the disposal of sub-munitions.



UNMAS South Sudan Programme Manager Mr. Tim Lardner briefs media in Juba on explosive hazards caused by the ongoing conflict. Photo: UNMISS/ John McIlwaine

communities, 389 infrastructure sites, including housing, markets and water points, have been made available for safe use and 50 schools were cleared to ensure children can safely access education facilities. Airstrips and helicopter landing sites were cleared 99 times which enabled humanitarian aid, such as food and medical supplies, to reach areas of need and survey and clearance tasks were completed to enable the safe expansion of United Nations Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites. In the aftermath of the eruption of intense fighting in July, UNMAS was a critical first responder, removing explosive hazards from key United Nations locations including the apron of the Juba airstrip, World Food Programme (WFP) and other agency compounds, United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) bases and PoC sites as well as from schools and residential civilian areas.

In **Sudan**, UNMAS deployed eight mine clearance teams primarily to the eastern states, but also in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. In 2016, Gedaref was declared free from known-landmine contamination.

This land is now used by local communities for agricultural development and income generating activities. All mine clearance operations in Sudan were implemented by national NGOs.

In **Somalia**, UNMAS has a humanitarian demining project on the border with Ethiopia in the federal state of Galmudug. This project has a positive impact beyond the removal of explosive hazards, as it creates employment opportunities for at-risk youth, who could otherwise be exploited by non-state armed groups. 133 people are employed and this year teams have cleared 90,000 sq m of land, destroying 480 items of ERW.

In the **Territory of Western Sahara**, UNMAS conducted battle area clearance, manual minefield clearance, EOD, technical and non-technical survey activities, as well as risk education, in mine-affected areas posing a threat to nomadic and local populations, and refugees. As a result, over 102,000 sq m of land was cleared and released to communities and 2,000 beneficiaries, including over 1,000 children, received risk education.

UNMAS PROVIDES SECURE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER IN SOUTH SUDAN

In South Sudan just 41 percent of the population has access to safe water, impacting a range of issues including the nutritional and health status of the population. Women and girls are usually responsible for the collection of water and at times are forced to walk long distances to reach safe water points. This can put women and girls in danger of personal attack while also negatively impacting on the amount of time girls can spend at school.

Unfortunately, water points can be strategic targets and as such are often contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) following conflict. Through survey activities, UNMAS has located 755 water points which are contaminated by mines and UXO, of which 680 have been cleared. UNMAS responded to a request from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to survey and clear borehole sites in Bentiu and similarly Oxfam requested assistance in Mundri where, afraid of explosive hazards in or close to their boreholes, the local population was consuming swamp water. *“We very much appreciate the work of UNMAS. Without them we would not be able to do our job. Their work makes Oxfam staff and the local population safer,”* said Mr. Nick Lacey, Programme Manager, Oxfam



Women pump water in Khor Dileb, Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan, following clearance by UNMAS. Photo: UNMAS/Justyna Pietralik

RISK EDUCATION

Specialized and highly-targeted risk education campaigns are incorporated into all UNMAS programmes to reduce the risk of injury from explosive hazards by raising awareness and promoting behavioural change through public information, education, training and community liaison.

UNMAS data confirms that risk education programmes reached over 1.8 million people in the first six months of 2016; 740,000 more than in the preceding six months of 2015.

In many of the countries where UNMAS works, IDPs and refugees, who are disproportionately at

risk of explosive hazard accidents, are a priority. They may be fleeing heavily contaminated areas where often roads, bridges and other places where people congregate are deliberately identified for booby trapping by combatants, or relocating to areas where fighting has previously taken place and resulting contamination is unknown to new arrivals.

The increase of conflict-induced displacement in **Afghanistan** and the sustained influx of returnees from Pakistan resulted in approximately one million civilians on the move in 2016. Working closely with agencies such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNMAS funded Afghan NGOs to provide risk education to IDP and returnee populations most vulnerable to explosive hazards. Almost 800,000 IDPs and returnees received risk education in addition to over 900,000 individuals from host communities.

Similarly, in **Syria**, shifting battle-lines and steadily growing contamination from explosive hazards threatens vulnerable communities and particularly IDPs. In response, UNMAS has coordinated

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.



extensive risk education across most of the country reaching nearly two million Syrians. As part of this effort, UNMAS facilitated risk education activities in Ar-Raqqa as well as for host communities and IDPs in three governorates. UNMAS developed messaging using a variety of media, including print



Students participate in an UNMAS risk awareness session in Fallujah, Iraq.
Photo: UNMAS Iraq.

UNMAS DEVELOPS THE CAPACITY OF LIBYAN WOMEN TO PROMOTE SAFETY

In March, UNMAS and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) co-hosted a roundtable discussion in Geneva entitled - "From Libya: Women contributing to peace, security, and resilience" - involving testimonials from Libya-based civil society activists.

The largely female panel discussed its work raising awareness through risk education focused on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The roundtable offered an excellent platform for women embracing the challenging task of strengthening community resilience in Libya, and allowed those attending to appreciate the crucial work undertaken by these women.



Libyan school children receiving risk awareness following teacher-training provided by UNMAS. Photo: UNMAS Libya

and video, for distribution in Syria through local partners. In this way, UNMAS can reach difficult to access areas, such as in Aleppo, Idlib and Manbij.

Also in the midst of conflict, in **Iraq**, UNMAS uses radio as well as face-to-face sessions to reach those at risk. To date, UNMAS has provided 69,920 Iraqis in Anbar, including in the Al Mazra'a IDP camp, with risk education and delivered IED awareness training sessions to United Nations

staff in anticipation of emergency assistance activities. In addition, UNMAS is deploying two emergency response teams to conduct survey and provide risk education at priority IDP camp sites in north-east Ninewah. Six risk education teams in southern Ninewah and Salah ah Din are disseminating messages on the risks of explosive hazards, training safety wardens and community focal points to provide peer-to-peer education and child-to-child risk education and disseminating

risk reduction information via local TV and radio. UNMAS, through the sub-cluster mechanism, is also distributing risk education materials in WFP emergency response rations.

In **South Sudan**, explosive threats are accumulating due to the ongoing fighting, and risk education is critical. UNMAS and UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education to integrate risk education into national curriculum. In Leer, after a period of intense fighting ceased, UNMAS was requested by the Norwegian Refugee Council to survey and deliver risk education to students, teachers and parents. Fifty schools were cleared by UNMAS in 2016 and risk education was delivered at each one. Over 385,000 people, including over 234,000 children, were given the knowledge they need to live more safely in their communities.

UNMAS also provided risk education sessions to civilians and humanitarian actors living in proximity to contaminated areas in **Sudan**. UNMAS delivered risk education messages through radio broadcasts and public information campaigns to reach mine-affected communities, refugees, and IDPs in camps. This year, Sudanese women aided the development and provision of materials in 13 local languages, including for civilians in remote locations such as South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, despite logistical challenges, UNMAS was able to deliver risk education in many remote conflict-affected areas. Leaflets, billboards, booklets and posters were developed and disseminated to affected communities throughout the country. UNMAS distributed 7,446 leaflets and 350 risk education booklets in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika. In partnership with national telecommunication companies, UNMAS also disseminated more than 11 million risk education messages by SMS text to 5.6 million beneficiaries living in Maniema, Tshopo, South-Kivu, North-Kivu, Ituri, Tanganyika, Kasai Oriental, Lomami, Sankuru, Kasai Central, and Kasai provinces. UNMAS reached approximately 2,000 civilians through 45 risk education or awareness sessions, as well as 265 United Nations staff.

In **Gaza**, UNMAS worked closely with UNICEF, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other international organizations to ensure the widespread delivery of risk education across the Gaza Strip. Through funding of NGOs, UNMAS provided 1,775 training sessions to enable United Nations staff, humanitarian workers, IDPs, engineers, construction workers and other at-risk populations including 33,540 children to identify and safely respond to ERW contamination.

WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION MANAGEMENT (WAM)

Unsafe, unsecured and poorly managed arms can cause unexpected explosions which kill people and damage property, make weapons and the ingredients for constructing IEDs available to armed groups, and diminish confidence in the authorities and security forces.

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, UNMAS is assessing and developing the WAM capacity of the government through the provision of safe storage, training, and technical advice. In collaboration with United Nations entities and the National Commission for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Armed Violence Reduction, UNMAS advised on a WAM baseline assessment to provide for a national action plan. UNMAS is also assisting the Congolese National Police through construction of three armouries in North Kivu province. Furthermore, UNMAS provided 800 gun safes, 100 pistol safes, and three weapon marking machines to national authorities, and delivered WAM training to 73 security forces staff in Goma and Kinshasa, ensuring a sustainable national capacity.

Similarly, UNMAS is assisting the Federal Government of **Somalia** in WAM in the context of the partial lifting of the Somalia arms embargo by the Security Council. In collaboration with other United Nations entities, a comprehensive support package includes assistance towards establishing the legislative frameworks, policies, procedures, equipment and infrastructure required for the transparent and effective management of state weapons and ammunition. This includes training and provision of equipment to the Ministry of Internal Security to mark and register newly imported weapons, and to destroy unserviceable



UNMAS developing national capacity in Mali. Photo: UNMAS Mali

and unsafe arms. Due to the success of the current project, the government of Somalia will expand weapons marking, registration and disposal capabilities at the regional level, within each of the Federal Member States.

RAPID RESPONSE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY

Through its Rapid Response and Technical Support Capacity (RRTSC), UNMAS is uniquely positioned to rapidly deploy experts and specialized equipment to mitigate threats posed by explosive hazards. Upon request, its technical support capacity also increases the capability of national counterparts through the provision of needs assessments, training and advice.

UNMAS technical expert's skills range from mine action programme management to explosive hazard clearance, quality management, risk education and WAM.

In January and February, UNMAS coordinated a United Nations inter-agency assessment mission to **Ukraine**. Similarly, in April, at the request of the

United National Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the RRTSC assessed the competence and capacity of the Armed Forces of **Liberia** to assume responsibility for EOD. More recently, in September, the Humanitarian Coordinator in **Cameroon** contacted UNMAS with a request to assess explosive threats impacting humanitarian responses in areas affected by Boko Haram.

In support of UNMAS programmes, RRTSC experts also deployed to **Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, the State of Palestine, Sudan and the Territory of Western Sahara** to provide technical support, especially in the area of programme management, operational coordination and WAM to ensure effective implementation of UNMAS programmes as well as enhanced coordination with, and capacity of, key partners and national authorities. For example in **Sudan**, the RRTSC organised a 3-week training on demining leadership targeting personnel of the National Mine Action Center to enhance their ability to conduct effective mine action and operational coordination.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO

Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and explosive remnants of war victims within broader responses to injury and disability

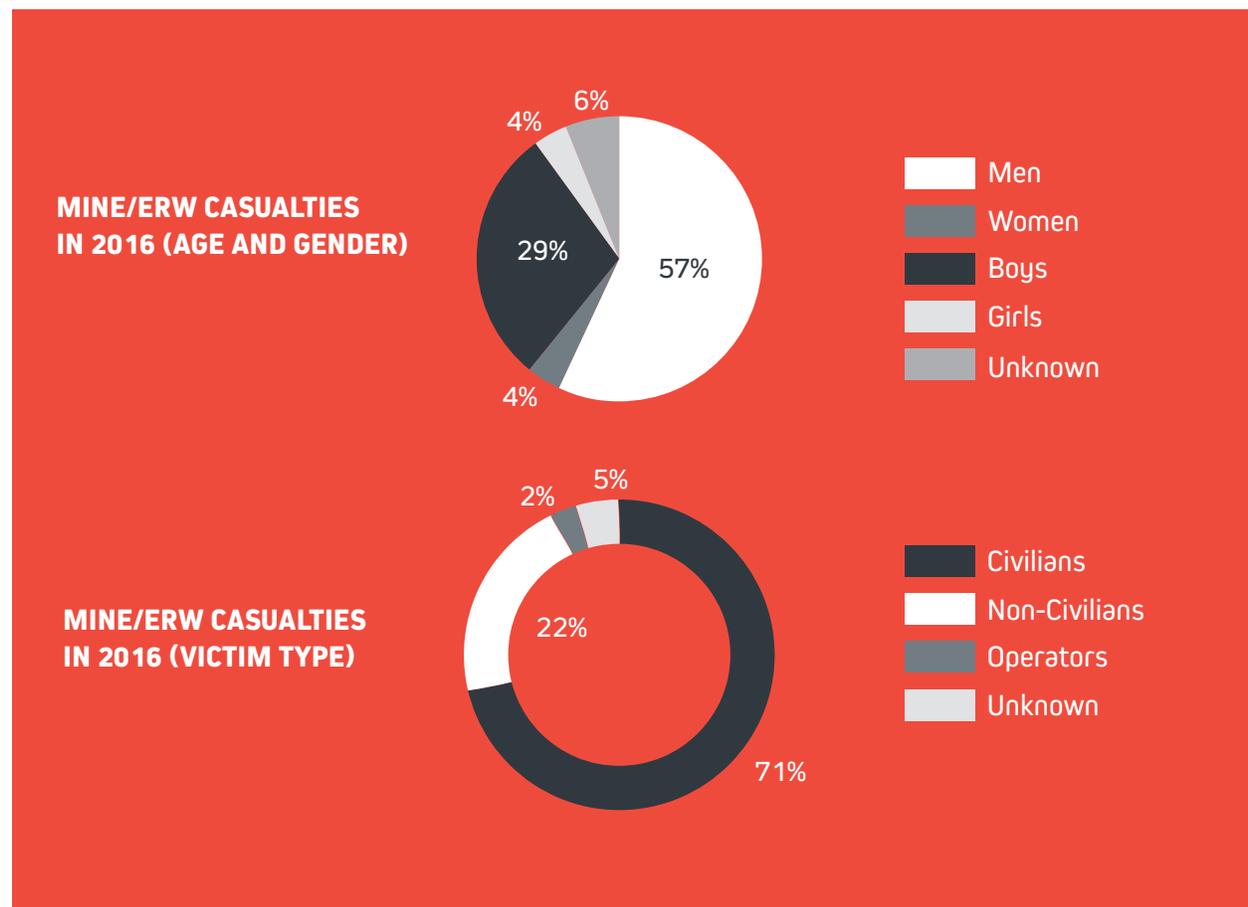
This year, UNMAS continued to support victims of mines and ERW around the world through a comprehensive approach to victim assistance.

UNMAS led and coordinated an update of the United Nations Policy on Victim Assistance in Mine Action. The new Policy ensures victim assistance is integrated into broader national frameworks, emphasizes the importance of sustained service and support to victims and addresses emerging threats such as IEDs. The impact is a greater coherence among United Nations agencies involved in victim assistance, which is resulting in improved services and assistance to victims.

Within the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (CRPD), UNMAS promotes the rights and specific needs of victims of explosive hazards, including through supporting the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action which ensures their inclusion in humanitarian action.

Responding to the needs of survivors is a core element of victim assistance, and it remains an UNMAS priority in many countries. The inclusive approach of UNMAS encourages partnership, and acts as a bridge between experts and local communities improving the care provided to victims. For example in **Gaza**, UNMAS continued to support victims of ERW accidents through a referral mechanism. From initial information gathering, referral to specialist organizations





UNMAS promotes inclusion of people with disabilities in all of its activities
Photo: UNMAS Gaza

through the UNMAS Mine Action Working Group in Gaza, and follow-up tracking of support provided, UNMAS ensured that victims received the care they required. Through this mechanism, UNMAS has been able to implement a sustainable victim assistance support system, linking victims to long-term service providers in Gaza.

In addition to its community level engagement, UNMAS also works closely with national authorities.

In **Sudan**, UNMAS supported the Government's development of a strategic framework and multi-year work plan to assist victims of mines and ERW. The work plan included providing direct health, socio-economic reintegration, and psychological support to victims. UNMAS also assisted 15 victims of landmine and ERW accidents with assistive devices, including prostheses and tricycles, psychological and social consultations, and supported the reintegration within their local communities through the provision of income-generating opportunities.

UNMAS SUPPORTS NATIONAL OWNERSHIP OF VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMING IN SUDAN

Victim Assistance is one of the five pillars of mine action; nevertheless, little work has been done for victims of landmine and ERW in Sudan. The Sudanese Government's Strategic Framework (SF) and Multi-Year Work Plan (MWP) for victim assistance have not been prioritized since the expiration of previous iterations in 2011. While various actors have made contributions in support of landmine and ERW victims, lack of coordination and shared objectives have resulted in few achievements, particularly in regard to the sustainability of support.

One of the primary goals of UNMAS in Sudan is to restructure the victim assistance response. On 31 August 2016, the first workshop was held to establish a revised Victim Assistance Strategic Framework and Multi-Year Work Plan. National actors who have made substantial achievements to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, including landmine and ERW victims, were invited. Ms. Sanaa Elnaw, a Sudanese NGO worker, highlighted that, *"Through this inclusive process and the active contributions made by men and women, UNMAS promotes ownership and capacity development of Sudanese people in VA at the national, local and individual level."*

UNMAS HELPS AFGHAN STUDENTS THRIVE IN THE MIDST OF CONFLICT

In August, gunmen stormed a heavily barricaded campus of the American University of Afghanistan firing at students, professors and guards in a ten hour siege that claimed the lives of 13 people and left 48 wounded.

The staff of the Afghan Civil Assistance Program (ACAP III) responded swiftly to the attack. Within 48 hours survey teams began visiting hospitals to identify victims and raise awareness about a 24 hour hotline established to provide victims and families with information on the services available through the project. ACAP III has provided psychosocial counseling to over 50 victims and family members, physical rehabilitation to eight victims and immediate assistance packages to seven victims.

For young students such as Anisa*, who sustained injuries jumping from the second story window of a classroom during the attack to avoid being shot, the ACAP III psychosocial support helped her repurpose her life. In Anisa's words *"After the incident I suffered from loss of appetite, restlessness and sleep disturbances. I heard crying and shooting noises in my mind and I was afraid. I decided I would never attend the University again to follow my higher education because of the fear. After meeting with [ACAP III] and attending the psychosocial counseling and following [their] advice and the exercises, all my symptoms have disappeared and now I feel psychologically very well...I have decided that when university reopens I will continue my higher education."*

* Name changed to protect anonymity.

In Syria, where the situation is increasingly kinetic and high levels of explosive contamination exist in areas inhabited or frequented by civilians, returnees, and IDPs, UNMAS established a coordination mechanism to include victim assistance through the Mine Action Sub Cluster as part of the system-wide humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis. As a result, UNMAS has established a victim assistance working group to identify ways to broaden the scope of victim assistance services in Syria.

Also in a volatile context, UNMAS continued to support victims of explosive hazards in **Afghanistan** through implementation of the Afghan Civilian Assistance Program III (ACAP III). The project provides immediate assistance packages, including food and non-food items, psychosocial counselling, physical rehabilitation, and economic reintegration assistance to those caught up in the conflict. Another major component of the project is strengthening the Government's capacity to deliver victim assistance. Since the inception of the program in July 2015, ACAP III has provided

services to over 72,000 Afghans of conflict and their families.

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.



At least one form of
victim assistance
provided in

15 out of **18**
countries/territories

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE

The transfer of mine action functions to national actors is accelerated, with national capacity to fulfil mine action responsibilities increased

UNMAS promotes national ownership of mine action functions by strengthening government capacity and by encouraging adherence to international standards while implementing best practices. Ensuring an affected country's ability to manage its own mine action programme is vital to guaranteeing a sustainable response and remains an important commitment for UNMAS. Data collected by UNMAS indicates that the organization continues to operate in contexts with significant national capacity challenges, notable progress is being made.

This year, significant steps were taken towards transferring responsibility for mine action coordination to the Government of **Afghanistan**. For most of the year, the United Nations Mine Action Centre of Afghanistan (UNMACA), staffed by 146 Afghan nationals, supported by a small international team, provided oversight and advice to the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC), the Government body responsible for coordination of mine action in Afghanistan. In September, the transfer of responsibility for the management of all UNMACA departments from UNMAS to DMAC was successfully completed.

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.



UNMAS will continue to provide technical and financial support to DMAC until 2018.

Similarly, in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, this year UNMAS successfully completed the transfer of responsibility for coordinating all humanitarian mine action activities to the National Mine Action Authority (CCLAM). Acting in support of CCLAM, UNMAS trained 15 CCLAM staff on project management, logistics, and mine action operations and collaborated with CCLAM on accreditation of mine action organizations prior to their deployment.

In **Colombia**, UNMAS embedded five national technical advisers to support the development of La Dirección para la Acción integral contra Minas Antipersonal (DAICMA), the national mine action authority in strategic communication, planning, monitoring and evaluation, victim assistance and national regulatory compliance. With the support of UNMAS, DAICMA approved the allocation of demining tasks in 62 municipalities to four accredited international civilian demining organizations and two military operators. In addition, the first Colombian civilian demining organisation, Campaña Colombiana contra Minas, has now been accredited along with three of 11 other civilian organizations pursuing accreditation. UNMAS also led or supported workshops and trainings for civilian demining organisations including on national technical standards and the use of mine detection dogs, and advised on the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in line with national and international standards.

Likewise, in **Iraq**, 15 people from the Police and 15 people from the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) were provided, at their request, with basic IED disposal training. In addition, UNMAS organized a three-week risk education and victim assistance management training course for Iraqi Directorate for Mine Action and IKMAA personnel to provide both knowledge and practical skills to plan, organize and manage programmes in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).



UNMAS provides training to the mine action sector on the use of mine detection dogs in Colombia. Photo: UNMAS Colombia

Since the relocation of the United Nations from **Libya** to Tunisia in 2014, UNMAS has found innovative ways to remotely support the National Mine Action Authority in Libya (LibMAC). UNMAS hosts monthly coordination meetings with implementing partners and the international community, as well as assists the LibMAC with accreditation procedures and the development of National Mine Action Standards. UNMAS delivered a non-technical survey and medical training course in Tunisia for 10 teams for Benghazi, where explosive hazards continue to pose an enormous threat to people returning to their homes. UNMAS delivered capacity-building trainings on IMSMA to 17 partners of the Libyan mine action community as well as training on quality assurance for four national counterparts from the LibMAC resulting in improved data management and increased quality of operations.

UNMAS is developing the capacity of both the mine action authorities and the police in **Somalia**. UNMAS support to the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) is focused especially on its inclusion in the Federal Government of Somalia budget, its integration into the Ministry of Internal Security, and processing national mine action legislation through Parliament. The gradual development of an IED Disposal capacity, supported by UNMAS, among the Somali

Police is steadily bearing fruit. The Police have responded effectively to the spate of IED attacks in Mogadishu, including by securing incident sites and by discovering secondary devices. Since mid-July, UNMAS together with the Somali Police, conducted bulk demolitions of some 700 ERW that were dangerously stored in and around destroyed bunkers in the vicinity of Mogadishu. This capacity will remain crucial in the lead-up to electoral processes in 2020.

Finally, in **Sudan**, UNMAS provides capacity development support to national mine action authorities and national NGOs, in quality assurance, data management and reporting, as well as team leader training. Notably UNMAS supported the national authorities' introduction of the latest information management system, IMSMA-NG, to be implemented in 2017. UNMAS also encouraged national ownership in mine action by facilitating increased engagement between the Government and donor countries, humanitarian agencies, and international mine action actors. Evidence of increased national ownership include the Vice-President of the Sudanese Government's involvement in the 2016 International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action and reiteration by the Government of its commitment to meet the obligations of APMBC.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR

Mine action is promoted and integrated in multilateral instruments and frameworks as well as national plans and legislation

PROMOTING AND MAINSTREAMING MINE ACTION

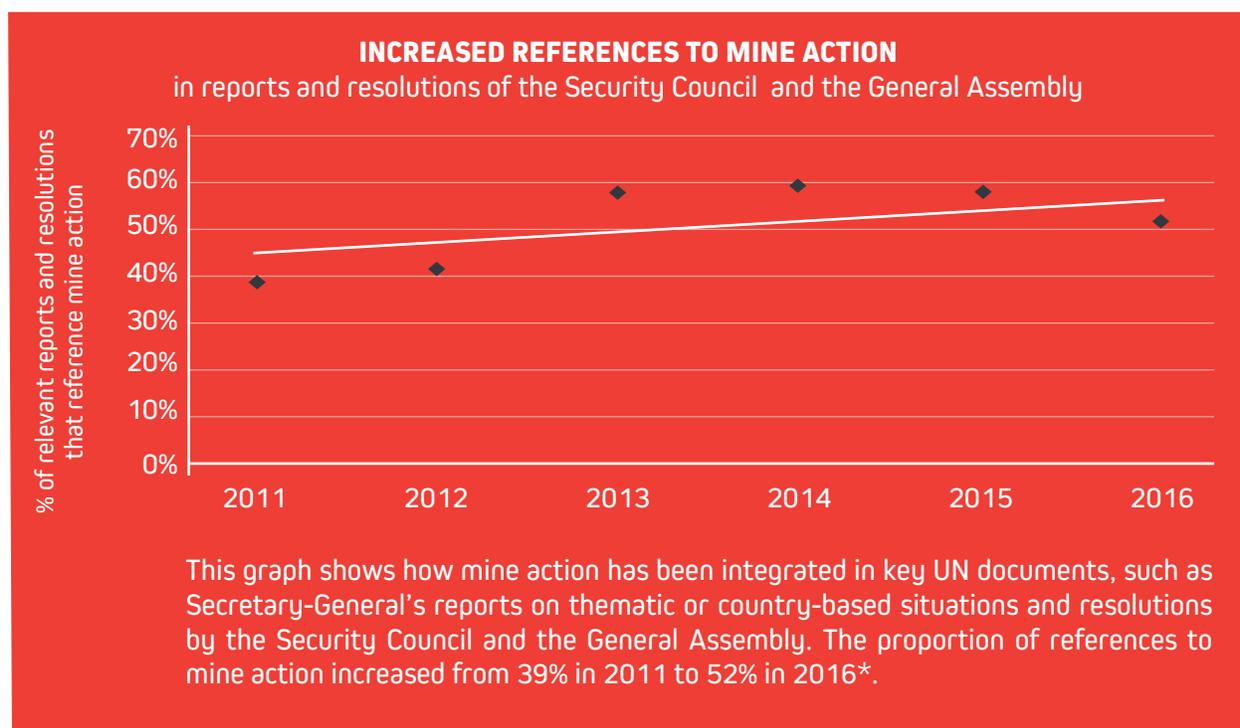
Through a wide range of social media tools, including websites, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, UNMAS drew global public attention to the threats posed by mines and other explosive hazards. This year, in particular with the engagement of the Global Advocate, Mr. Daniel Craig in UNMAS activities, UNMAS significantly increased its digital outreach audience, as evidenced by a notable rise in the number of visits to the United Nations Mine Action Gateway website, administered by UNMAS, which rose from an average of 10,000 visits per month in 2015 to more than 23,000 per month in 2016. Posts on the UNMAS Facebook page were seen by more than six million people, information shared on @UNMAS Twitter feed reached more than 212 million people and resulted in 52,000 interactions, and UNMAS Instagram account (un_mineaction) continues to garner an increasing number of followers.

UNMAS data confirms that efforts by UNMAS, in collaboration with Member States and other

United Nations entities, to mainstream mine action in relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly have been largely successful with the proportion of relevant documents that reference mine action consistently increasing over time, from 39 per cent in 2011 to 52 per cent in 2016¹.

References have ranged from recognizing the humanitarian impact of mines, ERW, and/or IEDs to calling for Member States and the United Nations to undertake specific activities to eliminate the threats posed by these explosive hazards. Mine action was included in situation reports related to peacekeeping, protection of civilians, children and armed conflict, as well as a report by the Secretary-General on countering the threat posed by IEDs. These figures demonstrate both the increased need for mine action and UNMAS success in advocacy.

The rise in references to IEDs has been significant. Between 2011 and 2016, the proportion of relevant United Nations resolutions and reports



* This figure is expected to rise further when documents issued at the end of 2016 are published



UNMAS Chief of Policy Ms. Abigail Hartley moderates a side event "Victims of Explosive Hazards: No-one Left Behind" held in the margins of the 9th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Photo: UNMAS/Larisa Khiryanova

mentioning IEDs increased from 7 per cent to nearly 23 per cent, and the analysis related to IEDs in Reports of the Secretary-General in 2016, such as the one on Children and Armed Conflict, has been increasingly thorough and more substantive. This trend correlates not only with the increased use of IEDs and their impact on United Nations staff and operations, but also with the measurable increase of civilian casualties due to IEDs.

The number of mine action references in peace agreements, ceasefire agreements, and related documents has also increased, doubling from ten per cent in 2011 to twenty per cent in 2016, with the number of ceasefire agreements mentioning mine action specifically seeing a rise from zero to 50 per cent in the same timeframe. The majority of references relate to clearance and decontamination of territories affected by anti-personnel mines, ERW and items of unexploded ordnance.

In partnership with Member States and civil society, UNMAS raised the profile and consistently promoted the added value of mine action by ensuring excellent visibility of the sector at high-level events throughout the year. UNMAS capitalized on the opportunity provided by the 6th Biennial Meeting of States to consider implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons to highlight, in partnership with the Permanent Missions of Lithuania and Cote d'Ivoire to the United Nations, UNMAS contribution to effective weapons and ammunition management practices and capacity development of Ivorian security forces. Working

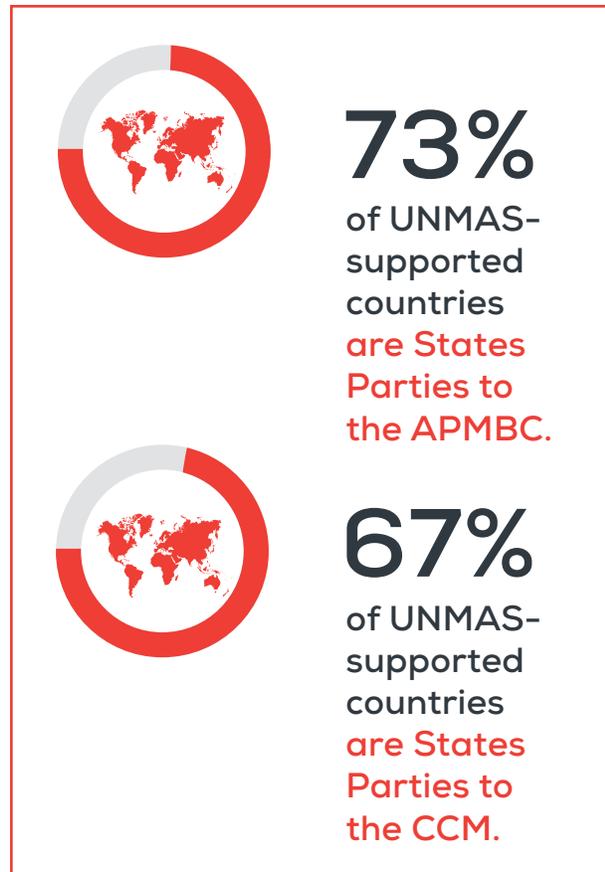
closely with the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations UNMAS also coordinated a side event during the Meeting of States Parties for the CRPD which highlighted innovative approaches to victim assistance, including in the area of 3D prosthetics.

In addition, on the margins of the First Committee of the General Assembly, UNMAS and Iraqi Ambassador Mohamed Ali Alhakim drew attention to the deadly impact of IEDs in that country through a panel discussion which also included the Vice-Director of the United States Joint Improvised Threat Defeat Organization. Furthermore, for the first time, UNMAS made a statement at the United Nations Economic and Social Council Humanitarian Affairs Segment in June, re-emphasizing the criticality of mine action to humanitarian action.

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.

79%
of UNMAS programmes
employ gender-sensitive
best practices in
programme design

In countries/territories where UNMAS has a presence.



UNMAS also ensured mine action remained on the international agenda by highlighting the issue in relevant United Nations publications including the Reports of the Secretary-General on “Protection of Civilians”, “Children affected by armed conflict”, “Rule of Law”, and “Small Arms and Light Weapons”, and the “Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations”.

PROMOTING MINE ACTION IN MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS AND FRAMEWORKS

UNMAS country-level presence continued to correlate with increased national attention to multilateral instruments and frameworks such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In 2016, **Cote d'Ivoire** became a State Party to the CCW, and

the Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the CRPD. UNMAS supports mine action efforts in both of these countries.

The 2016 United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Implementation of the APMBC was adopted in the First Committee with an overwhelming majority of 161 Member States in favor, reflecting a strong desire by Member States to engage productively with the APMBC and its meaningful implementation. This year UNMAS received specific requests from Colombia and Sudan to assist them in their efforts to improve adherence to their obligations under relevant treaties.

UNMAS presence at the WHS undoubtedly had a positive impact on commitments made at the Summit, including by Finland, Italy and Slovenia, and now mainstreamed into the Commitments Tracking Tool. Under WHS Core Commitment Two “promoting and enhancing the protection of civilians and civilian objects” mine action is clearly integrated into the over-arching humanitarian framework, thereby providing a legitimate platform for UNMAS advocacy.

Building on gains made in 2015, this year UNMAS intensified efforts to integrate mine action into the wider humanitarian frameworks in Geneva. For example, close cooperation and advocacy efforts with OCHA ensured the inclusion of humanitarian mine action and reference to the threats of explosive hazards to civilian populations across twelve countries, ten of which have an UNMAS presence, in the annual Global Humanitarian Overview and its status report. The work of UNMAS was also recognised within humanitarian planning tools, such as Humanitarian Country Team-led Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Strategic/ Humanitarian Response Plans.

MAINSTREAMING MINE ACTION IN NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

UNMAS advised national authorities to develop national plans, legislation and programmes that incorporate mine action.

UNMAS supported DAICMA in **Colombia** to develop the National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2016-

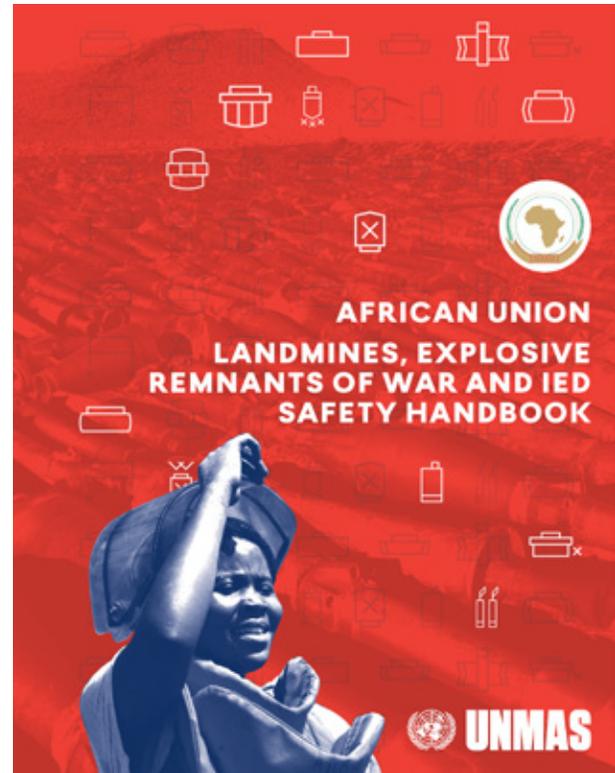
2021. It is the key mine action sector plan to contribute to peacebuilding and fulfilment of the country's obligations under the APMBC to remove all mine contamination by 2021.

Similarly in **Somalia**, UNMAS provided strategic policy advice and coordination support to the government to meet its international treaty obligations, primarily through supporting the Badbaado Plan – Somalia's plan for clearance of explosive hazards. In addition, UNMAS advised national authorities on incorporating an EOD component in the new policing model aimed at establishing a professional and accountable police force.

In **South Sudan**, UNMAS supported the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, to advocate for and assist with the development of a national policy for persons with disabilities. This policy was launched on 29 June, and enshrines the rights of people living with disabilities, including victims of explosive hazards.

PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICAN UNION AND NATO

UNMAS works closely with the African Union (AU) on policy and operational matters. In close cooperation with the AU and United Nations Office to the AU, a joint AU/UNMAS mine and ERW



safety handbook was finalized, published and distributed. In November and December, UNMAS representatives participated in the AU Physical Stockpile Security Management and mine and cluster munition convention consultative meetings, aimed at improving AU South South cooperation, and encouraging compliance with Articles 4 and 5 of the CCM. In order to further develop joint AU/UNMAS cooperation, an MOU was drafted and will be signed in early 2017.

Similarly, UNMAS continued to strengthen its partnership with NATO. Beginning with the NATO-United Nations staff talks in the spring, UNMAS has worked to leverage the repository of knowledge garnered through NATO's own lessons learned in a mutually beneficial relationship. In September, UNMAS participated in the EOD Center of Excellence Conference in Bratislava to provide an overview of the humanitarian response to explosive hazards and to frame a conversation of IEDs outside of NATO's military experience. This cooperation continued in December as UNMAS Director briefed senior NATO representatives at the Counter-IED Briefing Day in Brussels. NATO also serves as a technical resource in the development of the IED Disposal standards.

UNMAS/AU workshop on explosive hazard management for Ethiopian troops. Photo: UNMAS



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DONOR RELATIONS

UNMAS manages the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action (UN VTF), an established, reliable and agile mechanism that enables coherent multilateral responses to the risks posed by mines, ERW and other explosive hazards. The UN VTF is the United Nations “one-stop-shop” to support emergencies and other activities in situations where funding is not immediately available. Contributions to the UN VTF are used for direct and immediate impact. The UN VTF programme support cost (PSC) is just three per cent, significantly lower than the standard United Nations trust fund rate of 13 per cent.

The UN VTF is subject to United Nations internal and external audit and oversight mechanisms through the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services and the United Nations Board of External Auditors elected by Member States. UNMAS has strengthened its ability to maintain and expand its donor base and ensure greater transparency, accountability and visibility of contributions. More than sixty Member States and observers together with other public and private donors have contributed to the UN VTF to support assistance in mine action in dozens of countries and territories. In 2016, \$63 million was donated to UNMAS through the UN VTF, an increase of 21 per cent since 2015. This is the

UNMAS ENGAGES WITH PARLIAMENTS

This year, UNMAS prioritized engagement with parliamentarians in donor countries in an effort to keep mine action on national agendas. UNMAS Director met with numerous parliamentarians, from an array of political spectrums and representing a variety of commissions, in Denmark, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom, to encourage allocation of funds in annual budgets. These meetings have been well received by Member States. In some cases, UNMAS has also worked closely with civil society, for example the Italian Campaign to Ban Landmines, to jointly advocate the importance of mine action to parliaments and other key decision-makers.

second continuous year of growth underscoring the trust that the donors have placed in UNMAS and the UN VTF.

UNMAS interacts closely with Member States, including key decision-makers in ministries and parliaments, and with civil society to raise awareness of the importance of mine action and to ensure its inclusion in national budgets. This year,

ITALY TAKES THE REIGNS OF THE MASG IN 2016

In 2016, Italy assumed the role of Chair of the Mine Action Support Group (MASG), a collective of donor countries committed to mine action. The most recent interactive MASG meeting, led by H.E. Ambassador Inigo Lambertini featured a keynote address by Mr. Hervé Ladsous, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations.

In addition to hosting bi-annual MASG meetings in New York and Geneva, Italy has proactively used this forum to highlight mine action priorities and thematic topics including Colombia (in partnership with UNMAS and the Permanent Mission of Colombia) and Libya. In July, UNMAS Director was invited to brief the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group, also Chaired by Italy, to highlight the criticality of mine action to humanitarian activities in Iraq and Syria. Italian leadership is also active at the field level and several Ambassadors in affected states, including Sudan, have launched national MASGs to mobilise resources and increase awareness of regional mine action needs.



UNMAS conducting risk education sessions in South-Central Somalia, funded by the Government and People of Japan. Photo: HALO Trust

UNMAS has established new partnerships with the private sector and launched innovative fundraising platforms targeting individuals, which has resulted in a broadened donor base and increased funding.

2016 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND FOR ASSISTANCE IN MINE ACTION

The General Assembly Resolution on Assistance in Mine Action urges “reliable, predictable, timely and where possible, multi-annual contributions for mine action activities.” UNMAS commitment to good stewardship of all donor contributions and its emphasis on transparency, accountability, timely reporting and donor visibility has been rewarded again by increased donor support in 2016. All contributions detailed below were received through the UN VTF in 2016 as reflected in the United Nations contribution receipt voucher.

UNEARMARKED FUNDING

Unearmarked contributions, also known as core or flexible funding, ensure UNMAS global operation. Unearmarked funding enables the delivery of mine action activities in a predictable and timely manner and provides programmes with adequate

backstopping to implement projects efficiently and in full compliance with donor agreements. It also guarantees strong internal management, resulting in sound administrative procedures, rigorous financial oversight, robust M&E, effective mine action coordination and advocacy and high quality information management.

In 2016, unearmarked funding allowed UNMAS to scale up operations in Afghanistan, Colombia, Gaza, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and the Territory of Western Sahara, strengthen the RRTSC, enhance UNMAS management, coordination, global advocacy and other core activities and maintain the M&E Mechanism which monitors outcomes of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. The following Member States provided unearmarked contributions to the UN VTF in 2016. Figures are in USD.

- ✓ The Netherlands – 2,091,600
- ✓ New Zealand – 979,800
- ✓ Luxembourg – 1,092,800
- ✓ Australia – 371,230
- ✓ Japan – 86,158
- ✓ Liechtenstein – 25,573
- ✓ Andorra – 16,634

CHRISTIE'S JAMES BOND AUCTION BENEFITS UNMAS

EON Productions, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios and Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment organised, with Christie's Auction House, a sale to benefit UNMAS. The original prototype of the Omega Seamaster 300 watch, worn by the United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, Mr. Daniel Craig, as James Bond in the movie Spectre, was one of the pieces put to auction, successfully raising funds for UNMAS.

EARMARKED FUNDING

UNMAS is also grateful for Member States' earmarked contributions for operations globally.

Afghanistan

- ✓ USAID – 10,000,000
- ✓ Canada – 3,115,264
- ✓ Japan – 2,000,000
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 2,000,000
- ✓ OCHA CERF – 232,232

Colombia

- ✓ European Union – 1,809,693
- ✓ Germany – 557,250
- ✓ Italy – 208,720
- ✓ Switzerland – 203,520
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 100,000

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- ✓ Japan – 2,000,000
- ✓ UNA-Sweden – 53,158
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 25,000

Gaza / The State of Palestine

- ✓ European Union – 860,928
- ✓ United Kingdom – 741,658
- ✓ Japan – 500,000
- ✓ Italy – 207,580
- ✓ Poland – 50,351
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 50,000
- ✓ Switzerland – 50,000

Iraq

- ✓ United Kingdom – 5,897,150
- ✓ Germany – 5,373,750
- ✓ European Union – 4,213,331

- ✓ Japan – 4,000,000
- ✓ Australia – 3,788,473
- ✓ Denmark – 2,112,289
- ✓ Italy – 552,400
- ✓ Canada – 275,384
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 50,000

Libya

- ✓ OCHA CERF – 365,644
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 50,000

Mali

- ✓ OCHA CERF – 365,000

Somalia

- ✓ Japan – 2,400,000
- ✓ United Kingdom – 857,942

South Sudan

- ✓ Japan – 2,300,000

Sudan

- ✓ Japan – 2,100,000
- ✓ Sudan Humanitarian Fund – 506,000
- ✓ Italy – 260,900
- ✓ Republic of Korea – 25,000

Syria

- ✓ OCHA – 3,174,353
- ✓ Japan – 1,000,000
- ✓ Italy – 509,561

Territory of Western Sahara

- ✓ Germany – 1,131,673
- ✓ Spain – 50,519

UNMAS GLOBAL EXPENDITURE 2016

PROGRAMME/ACTIVITY	2016 EXPENDITURES*
UNMAS Global Operation	5,671,208
Rapid Response and Technical Support Capacity	3,492,957
Afghanistan	15,682,132
Colombia	1,506,149
The Democratic Republic of the Congo	4,356,545
Iraq	5,520,515
Libya	9,920
The State of Palestine	1,395,512
Somalia	2,640,45
South Sudan	1,761,268
Sudan	996,184
Syria	269,871
The Territory of Western Sahara	119,491
Total	\$43,422,210

* Data provided above is provisional. The 2016 statement of income and expenditures certified by the United Nations Board of Auditors will be forthcoming when available. UNMAS reports financial information to its donors as required contractually and in accordance with established United Nations practices.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

UNMAS continued to benefit from in-kind contributions of personnel from Benin, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America. In addition, technical equipment was provided by Schonstedt Instrument Company.

PARTNERSHIP AND OUTREACH

UNMAS is reaching new audiences through strategic partnership, innovative fundraising tools and global outreach activities.

UNMAS collaborated with advertising giant Saatchi & Saatchi Denmark to develop an Instagram version of the classic computer game "MineSweeper." As the game is played, images are revealed that sensitize users to the victims of mines and ERW and encourage donations to support UNMAS work. The game was launched on 4 April. *"This is an amazing outreach and fundraising tool. It is a unique mixture of the old with the new, taking a popular game from the dawn of the digital age and building a new version on what is today one*

the fastest growing social media sites in the world. We are very grateful to Saatchi & Saatchi Denmark for their time, innovation and commitment to the vision of the United Nations of making a world free from the threat of landmines and explosive hazards," stated the Director of UNMAS, Ms. Agnès Marcaillou.

The "Sweeper" exhibit, an exciting and educational digital minefield experience, developed by UNMAS and digital agency Critical Mass in 2014, was installed as a permanent fixture of the United Nations tour in New York. "Sweeper" takes people through a chilling multi-sensory tour through a virtual minefield. On 4 April, "Sweeper" was unveiled in Geneva, in the Palais des Nations, to raise awareness and funds during 4 April week.

In 2016, UNMAS saw a significant increase in private donations. Hundreds of individuals contributed to the work of UNMAS using online and mobile phone platforms powered by the United Nations Foundation. To learn more about how you or your organisation can support UNMAS, visit www.unmas.org

SWEDES SUPPORT MINE ACTION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

UNMAS vision for a world free of the threat of mines and ERW, and its commitment to achieving results, appeals to a broad range of supporters. The United Nations Association of Sweden, a coalition of individuals in 120 local chapters, has tirelessly raised funds to implement mine action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In partnership with the Pole Institute, UNMAS carried out a risk education campaign using radio messages and SMS to target contaminated communities and IDPs on the threats of weapons and explosive hazards, and to promote safe behaviour. UNA Sweden enabled 150,000 people to be reached through this project.

“We are proud to partner with UNMAS to support mine action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are prioritizing efforts to eradicate the threat of illegal weapons and explosive hazards in order to create peace and security, as well as to ensure development and human rights for all” stated Linda Nordin, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Association of Sweden. *“Together we are building hope for future generations.”*



In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNMAS broadcasted risk awareness messages on Radio Okapi.
Photo: MONUSCO/Abel Kavanagh



UNMAS 2016 SNAP SHOT

18 PROGRAMMES
around the world



33 UNMAS STAFF
(63% FEMALE) in UNHQ & Geneva

229 INTERNATIONAL STAFF
(30% FEMALE)

525 NATIONAL STAFF
(16% FEMALE)

+ 4,368 NATIONAL STAFF EMPLOYED THROUGH UNMAS FUNDING

Aggregates



DESTROYED

- ▶ **195,216** explosive remnants of war
- ▶ **14,000** landmines
- ▶ **468** IEDs



CLEARED

- ▶ **161 sq km** land = **14,900** football pitches
- ▶ **3,000 km** roads



WEAPONS & AMMUNITION STORAGE CONSTRUCTED

- ▶ **100**



RISK EDUCATION PROVIDED

- ▶ Over **4,300,000** people impacted by explosive hazards
Women 408,000 • Girls 1,600,000 • Men 470,000 • Boys 1,840,000



VICTIMS ASSISTED

- ▶ **72,800**



TRAINED

- ▶ Over **7,700** healthcare workers, police, teachers, military personnel



RAPID RESPONSE/TECHNICAL SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS

- ▶ Cameroon, Liberia, Ukraine



UNMAS

20

**in Peace Operations
2016**



CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	2
MESSAGE FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARIES-GENERAL.....	3
UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (MINURSO).....	4
UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (MINUSCA)	4
UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN MALI (MINUSMA).....	5
UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (MONUSCO)	7
UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ (UNAMI).....	7
AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID).....	8
UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (UNFICYP).....	9
UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)	10
UNITED NATIONS INTERIM SECURITY FORCE FOR ABYEI (UNISFA)	10
UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS).....	11
UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE (UNOCI)	12
UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN LIBYA (UNSMIL)	13
UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE IN SOMALIA (UNSOS) ¹ AND THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA (UNSOM)	13

Information provided in alphabetical order of mission acronym.

¹ Previously United Nations Support Office to AMISOM (UNSOA).

ACRONYMS

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally displaced person
IED	Improvised explosive device
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
PoC	Protection of civilians
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSOS	United Nations Support Office in Somalia
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
WAM	Weapons and ammunition management
WHO	World Health Organization

MESSAGE FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARIES-GENERAL OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Armed conflicts are increasingly protracted and complex and United Nations peace operations are becoming more and more dangerous. In 2016, we saw more peacekeepers killed and injured in improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in Mali and in November, a shocking IED attack on peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo showed that we need a trusted capacity to respond to these challenges across our global operations.

In September, the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial meeting in London recognised these trends and also the need for rapid deployment of an effective response. This is impossible without the explosive hazard threat mitigation experience and skills unique to UNMAS. UNMAS protects the lives of both civilian and uniformed peacekeepers, enables their mobility, and builds their capacity. No longer limited to landmine clearance, UNMAS has broadened its scope, providing peace operations with specialized innovative advice and technical support, coordination and national capacity development.

Throughout the year, UNMAS delivered critical services to 13 peace operations. Following the outbreak of fighting in Juba, we relied on UNMAS as a vital first responder. In extremely challenging and dangerous circumstances, UNMAS acted quickly to remove explosive hazards from important mission locations including the Juba airstrip, United Nations bases and Protection of Civilian sites.

As part of the United Nations mission in Iraq, UNMAS is conducting clearance operations around key infrastructure sites, strengthening the national capacity in IED threat mitigation and delivering critical risk education. This is essential to saving lives, enabling humanitarian access and creating the space required for stabilization activities.

At the policy level, UNMAS plays an indispensable role in United Nations IED threat mitigation efforts, highlighted this year by their production of DPKO/DFS Guidelines on IED threat mitigation, an IED Lexicon and an online IED resource hub, all vital tools for safer peace operations.

We place tremendous value on UNMAS contribution to peace and security. UNMAS provides a proven, reliable service to humanitarian, conflict prevention and stabilization efforts of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General noted in the 2015 Annual Report, “Nimble, trustworthy, dedicated and effective, UNMAS embodies the United Nations at its best.”

The need for rapid, effective and well-coordinated mine action is more vital than ever. It is vital to the people caught up in conflict and vital to the safety of those trying to assist them. We commend UNMAS for its work. We encourage you to read this annual report and consider how partnership with UNMAS may prove fruitful for the fulfilment of your goals.



UN Photo/DPA

Jeffrey Feltman
Under-Secretary-General
for Political Affairs



UN Photo/Amanda Voisard

Hervé Ladsous
Under-Secretary-General
for Peacekeeping Operations

UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (MINURSO)

Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2285 (2016), UNMAS continued to play a critical role in facilitating MINURSO's efforts to monitor the ceasefire and reduce the danger posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) alongside the 1,600 kilometre berm dividing the Territory of Western Sahara. To this end, UNMAS verified patrol and logistical supply routes to the east of the berm, surveyed and cleared mine/ERW contaminated areas including water borehole sites, and provided mine/ERW safety training to MINURSO personnel. Capacity enhancement efforts continued as UNMAS provided information management support to national mine action operators and engaged with stakeholders to improve coordination and information sharing on mine/ERW activities throughout the territory. In March 2016, UNMAS was requested to suspend operations and depart Laayoune, leaving the Mission with no capacity to mitigate the risk posed by landmines and ERW. In September however, mine action operations and coordination with local counterparts east of the berm resumed from Tindouf, Algeria where UNMAS relocated.

UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (MINUSCA)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2301 (2016), UNMAS supports national authorities in the management of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ammunition storage, and collects and destroys surplus, seized or illicitly held weapons and ammunition. In 2016, UNMAS enhanced national capacities by providing training to 46 members of the national security forces in armoury management. Operations also included the construction and rehabilitation of 19 military and security forces weapons storage facilities. In Birao, UNMAS destroyed 175 tons of explosives and 159,540 detonators located in a storage area close to the town and MINUSCA offices which had posed an immediate danger to inhabitants. Over 6,500 risk reduction sessions explaining the dangers of explosive hazards and small arms and light weapons and promoting risk mitigation behaviour were conducted within at risk communities, reaching over 260,000 beneficiaries. In addition, the programme conducted awareness sessions to 2,700 UN staff on the risks posed by IEDs and ERW.



In the Central African Republic, UNMAS delivers risk education to children and community members to raise awareness of the dangers posed by ERW and small arms and light weapons. Photo/UNMAS CAR

UNMAS ASSISTANCE TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

To support investigations into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the conflict in 2013, the ICC requested UNMAS assistance in providing information on possible explosive hazard contamination in Bangui. UNMAS conducted contamination assessments in areas suspected of containing mass graves located in the outskirts of the capital. UNMAS support ensured safe access, contributing to the success of the ICC mission.

UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN MALI (MINUSMA)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2295 (2016), UNMAS is mandated to support the Malian authorities in protecting civilians and UN personnel through increasing mobility and therefore facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance through risk education, clearance operations and IED threat mitigation. In northern Mali, where MINUSMA operates in an asymmetric threat environment, UNMAS advised, trained and mentored peacekeeping troops on how to operate amid such threats, enhancing freedom of movement and implementation of the mission mandate. UNMAS also supported the deployment of national Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) capacities in northern Mali through specialized training and mentorship of the Malian Defence and Security Forces.

EMERGENCY MINE ACTION RESPONSE IN NORTHERN MALI

Since July, several clashes have taken place in the vicinity of Kidal town, northern Mali, between armed groups signatory to the Mali Peace Agreement. ERW have been reported near combat locations, as was an incident in which one child was killed and one injured. To prevent further incidents, UNMAS and partners coordinated an emergency mine action response. In August, mobile risk education teams deployed to areas affected by the fighting to alert the most vulnerable people to the threat of ERW. Within hours, at-risk groups were informed about safe behaviours to adopt in the presence of explosive hazards.

This intervention was primarily geared towards women street cleaners who may find unexploded devices during their daily work, families who left the town due to insecurity now planning to return home unaware of the new dangerous areas, and children, who represent 60% of victims since 2012, mainly as a result of their curiosity and lack of knowledge of the danger.

In parallel, UNMAS conducted surveys to secure areas potentially contaminated by dangerous items and to identify the requirement for the intervention of EOD specialists.

Safe management of government controlled weapons and ammunition stockpiles is a key enabler to stabilization efforts in Mali, reducing the likelihood and impact of unplanned explosions and the potential for diversion of munitions. UNMAS technical assistance in stockpile management included destroying obsolete and precariously stored ammunition, and refurbishing armouries. UNMAS assisted the Government to establish a national EOD Operations Coordination Centre within the Direction du Genie Militaire in Bamako, elaborating National Mine Action Standards and providing technical advice to the National Commission to Counter the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons on compliance with regional/international treaty obligations.



Children from a nomad community in Gao, Mali take part in a risk education session.
UNMAS/Sonia Pezier

UNMAS increased the safety of civilians living in areas contaminated by explosive hazards through effective coordination, prioritization and quality of the work of civilian mine action operators. UNMAS interventions also included assessment and clearance of areas reported as dangerous, emergency risk education and survey in areas exposed to immediate threats, and the employment of persons with disabilities including explosive incident victims. UNMAS started a project in Timbuktu and Gao to provide income-generating activities to empower specifically victims of explosive hazard incidents; twelve people who were trained under this initiative now provide risk education to communities in at-risk locations and have become role models for others with disabilities.

PROTECTING MALIAN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM EXPLOSIVE THREATS

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has registered 138,800 Malians who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and reported over 56,600 returning refugees in 2016 alone. If the country remains stable, it is expected that the number of returnees will increase exponentially. Explosive hazards in northern and central Mali jeopardize the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially given their lack of familiarity with recent events, conflict zones, and resulting contamination. When returnees finally arrive home, the risk of incidents with explosive hazards is higher than for those who remained. UNMAS provides emergency risk education and contamination survey in IDPs' home villages when contamination is expected.

To plan and prioritize awareness activities targeting these groups, UNMAS works with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNHCR, at national and regional levels. In support of IOM work in Timbuktu, UNMAS also funded a mine action team to assess 114 returnee shelter sites for possible explosive remnants of war contamination and provided risk education to returnees.

In 2016, 1,070 returnees received risk education. In addition, 3,120 nomads and 1,360 refugees from neighbouring countries benefited from awareness raising.

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (MONUSCO)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2277 (2016), UNMAS contributes to three mandated objectives of MONUSCO; protection of civilians; stabilization; and democratic governance and institutional reform. UNMAS mitigates threats posed to civilians through EOD operations and the destruction of explosive hazards before, during and after joint combat operations against illegal armed groups in the east of the country. In 2016, UNMAS conducted 235 EOD tasks resulting in the destruction of 514 weapons, 24,400 items of ERW and 349,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. UNMAS also built five armouries and trained 60 national police in weapons safety management in Bunia, Ituri Province, and Bukavu, South Kivu Province. On 8 November 2016, an IED attack directed at MONUSCO personnel occurred in Goma. The incident resulted in the death of one civilian and injury of two civilians as well as 32 MONUSCO peacekeepers. Following the incident, and in order to support MONUSCO to enhance its preparedness for possible IED attacks, UNMAS immediately deployed one expert from MINUSMA to support the implementation of IED awareness training to MONUSCO personnel and to assist MONUSCO in developing an IED threat mitigation strategy and minimum response capacity.

UNMAS PROTECTING WILDLIFE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Virunga National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Virunga is Africa's oldest national park and is the continent's most biologically diverse protected area. It is home to a quarter of the world's critically endangered mountain gorillas as well as chimpanzees, okapi, hippopotami, elephants, lions, and numerous rare bird species. The park has long been a base for armed groups due to its strategic location and is now contaminated with explosive hazards. UNMAS funded The Development Initiative to destroy over 4,000 items of abandoned explosive ordnance in the park in support of the Congolese Natural Conservation Institute.

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ (UNAMI)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2299 (2016), UNMAS developed a strategy that supports the Government of Iraq and United Nations stabilization efforts, as well as humanitarian activities enabling the return of displaced people to areas previously occupied by Da'esh. UNMAS emergency response strengthens the mine action capacity of governmental entities and authorities, including in carrying out risk education campaigns.

UNMAS SUPPORT TO UNICEF-WHO MISSION IN IRAQ

On 11 November, UNMAS provided IED threat mitigation support to a UNICEF-WHO mission to Gogchali, a suburb of eastern Mosul, which had witnessed recent mortar and rocket attacks. The purpose of the very high risk mission was to identify the safest locations for possible food/medical distribution sites in the suburb. By conducting the assessment, UNMAS facilitated a successful UN food drop and the safe distribution of humanitarian aid.

AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2296 (2016), UNMAS implemented ERW clearance activities, conducted weapons and ammunition management activities, and provided support to survivors of unexploded ordnance accidents. These activities contributed to the protection of civilians and safe delivery of humanitarian assistance, and facilitated safe voluntary return of IDPs and refugees. UNMAS also provided five weapons-marking machines to support voluntary disarmament activities conducted through the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission.

In addition, UNMAS assisted the UN Police to provide firearms safety awareness training to the Sudanese police, in support of community policing efforts. In collaboration with the National Mine Action Center, UNMAS provided training to, and mentoring of, national clearance operators.



ERW risk awareness information displayed at a reception for United Nations Day in Darfur. Photo: UNMAS Darfur

UNMAS SUPPORTS GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION MANAGEMENT IN DARFUR

In Darfur, SALW related accidents are a regular occurrence. The presence of government-controlled weapons and ammunition in close proximity to villages constitutes a serious threat to local populations. Reported SALW accidents occur as a result of accidental detonations due to weaknesses in storage management and also as a result of theft of small arms and ammunition from storage areas which are not sufficiently secure. UNMAS completed the refurbishment, using modified sea containers, of 25 weapons and ammunition storage facilities in selected Government of Sudan police stations in Darfur. This activity had a direct impact on the safety of the police and local populations living in close proximity to storage facilities.

UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (UNFICYP)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2300 (2016) in July UNMAS provided a dedicated capacity to conduct mine action planning and coordination, demining operations, quality assurance of demining as well as data management. UNMAS activities support confidence building between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, and support UNFICYP's mandate to "contribute to a return to normal conditions" on the island. UNMAS also provided support to the Committee on Missing Persons to ensure safe access to areas where they conduct their activities. Since August, UNMAS has cleared over 29,000 sq m of land in Cyprus.



Minefield marking signs used in UNMAS operations in Cyprus. Photo/ UNFICYP

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2305 (2016), UNMAS enables UNIFIL demining activities along the “Blue Line”, which was established in the year 2000 following the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. UNMAS supported UNIFIL’s efforts to open safe lanes through known minefields in order to visibly mark and access the Blue Line. Through training, quality assurance and monitoring activities UNMAS ensures compliance with International Mine Action Standards. UNMAS conducted 117 quality assurance assessments for 7 UNIFIL demining teams. Moreover, UNMAS provided landmine/ERW safety training to 71 UNIFIL and UN personnel along with explosive ordnance awareness to 70 Observer Group Lebanon personnel.



UNIFIL Chief of Staff being briefed by UNMAS at a demining site in Lebanon.
Photo/UNMAS Lebanon

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM SECURITY FORCE FOR ABYEI (UNISFA)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2318 (2016), UNMAS is mandated to ensure freedom of movement of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, as well as to identify and clear mines in the Abyei Area and the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone. Through the provision of explosive hazard clearance in the Abyei Area and the delivery of risk education, UNMAS contributed to a safe and secure environment that facilitated safe voluntary returns of people displaced and accident-free migration of local communities. UNMAS work also enhanced UNISFA freedom of movement and the safe delivery of humanitarian aid. In addition, UNMAS continues to support UNISFA in weapons and ammunition management activities in line with the UNISFA mandate to enforce a “weapons-free” Abyei.

TRANSLATION OF RISK EDUCATION MATERIALS IN ABYEI

UNMAS continues to explore ways to best reach local communities, UNISFA and UN agency personnel, as well as UNISFA troops to ensure that risk education messages are properly understood. This year the “UNMAS Landmines, ERW and IED Safety Handbook” was translated into Amharic, the language of the UNISFA military contingent from Ethiopia. In addition, an Abyei specific landmine and ERW safety pocket guide was developed and made available in English, Arabic (for the Misseriya nomads), Dinka (for the Ngok Dinka communities) and Amharic.

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2304 (2016), UNMAS carried out mandated tasks to protect civilians and create conditions for the delivery of humanitarian aid. UNMAS surveyed and cleared explosive hazards, including landmines, which posed a direct threat to civilians in and around UNMISS protection of civilians (PoC) sites as well as areas allocated to returnees for resettlement and other locations used by civilians, such as schools, water points, and markets. In addition UNMAS provided explosive detection dog teams for enhanced entry control and security measures at UNMISS bases and PoC sites in Juba as well as the UN aviation terminal. UNMAS enabled the delivery of emergency and life-saving aid through the verification and clearance of roads, helicopter landing and food-drop sites and the provision of convoy escorts as requested by peacekeepers and humanitarian actors. Risk education and public information campaigns were delivered by UNMAS and its partners on the dangers posed by explosive hazards for civilians, peacekeepers and humanitarians, particularly after fighting occurred in Juba in July. At this time UNMAS was a critical first responder, removing explosive hazards from key UN locations including the apron of the Juba airstrip, WFP and other agency compounds, UNMISS bases and PoC sites as well as from schools and residential areas.

UNMAS QUICK RESPONSE PROTECTS CIVILIANS IN SOUTH SUDAN

During the clashes between opposing government forces at the beginning of July, the Jebel area of Juba, where the UNMISS Headquarters and three PoC sites are located, saw some of the most intense fighting.

When the ceasefire took hold, UNMAS quick response teams were deployed to the area to conduct emergency survey and clearance activities. While one team began clearing explosive hazards from Mission offices and accommodation, a second team worked at the PoC sites. UNMAS conducted a perimeter search of the sites, which involved removing vegetation from 210,000 sq m of land adjacent to the perimeter fences. Once cleared, the Mission was able to create a 200-metre weapons-free zone around the PoC sites to enhance the safety and security of inhabitants.

PoC sites are located throughout the country sheltering over 200,000 people that have been displaced by the ongoing conflict. As the conflict and concurrent humanitarian crisis deepens, increasing demand is placed upon these areas of refuge. By removing explosive hazards from PoC peripheries, UNMAS regularly supports the Mission to expand the sites enabling a greater number of people to be protected. Using manual and canine methods, UNMAS conducts entry point control and supports regular searches within the PoC sites to locate and remove hazardous items which could be harmful to those living on the sites.

UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE (UNOCI)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2284 (2016) and ahead of transitioning its programme to national authorities planned for June 2017, UNMAS determined to reinforce the capacity of national defence and security forces to independently manage explosive threats and ammunition depots through training and mentorship and the creation of a central EOD cell in the quick response unit of the Inter-ministerial Coordination Center. In addition, UNMAS supported the rehabilitation of 52 armouries and ammunition storage facilities across the country. UNMAS also destroyed 70 tons of unserviceable ammunition and systematically checked mission camps for explosive hazards after UNOCI troop departures.



UNMAS oversees a demolition operation in Côte d'Ivoire by the L'Unité d'intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale. Photo by UNMAS/Marta Farres

SAFE AND SECURE AMMUNITION STORAGE AREAS PROVIDED BY UNMAS IN COTE D'IVOIRE

In 2016, UNMAS completed the upgrading of the last major ammunition storage area in Cote d'Ivoire. Since 2012, UNMAS has constructed and rehabilitated 248 armouries and ammunition storage facilities throughout the country, including 7 major national munitions depots, in line with international standards of safety and security.

UNMAS also put in place measures to safely secure arms and ammunition. For example, in the ammunition storage area at the air base compound in Bouake, UNMAS reinforced doors, built a guard post and a perimeter fence, installed a generator and a lighting protection system and fabricated wooden ammunition storage pallets to ensure stocks are properly and securely stored in accordance with international standards.

Thanks to UNMAS support, Cote d'Ivoire has 77 large ammunition stores strategically located throughout the country able to safely and securely accommodate 60,000 tons of ammunition or 265,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.

UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN LIBYA (UNSMIL)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2291, UNMAS supports UNSMIL in securing uncontrolled arms and related materiel and countering their proliferation in Libya. UNMAS also assists the Libyan authorities on early institution-building in the areas of ammunition management, arms control, and humanitarian mine action. UNMAS support includes training, particularly on EOD and medical response, mine risk education, and coordination of all national and international mine action partners. UNMAS also trained national counterparts on information management and quality assurance to strengthen their capacity to plan, deliver and document mine action activities.



In Libya, UNMAS provides Emergency Trauma Bag training to ensure proper first responder care during medical emergencies. Photo/UNSMIL

UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE IN SOMALIA (UNSOS) AND THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA (UNSOM)

Pursuant to UNSCR 2275 (2016) and 2317 (2016), UNMAS is integrated in UNSOM and its Rule of Law and Security Institutions Group. UNMAS main objectives are the establishment of a functional and accountable Somali Explosive Management Authority, the development of a national police explosive hazard management capacity, and the formation of a comprehensive weapons and ammunition management (WAM) system in line with sanction obligations under the partial lifting of the arms embargo.

Pursuant to UNSCR 2297, UNMAS is also a component of UNSOS. UNMAS provides explosive threat mitigation support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as part of the non-lethal logistical support package provided by the United Nations to the African Union (AU) troops from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. UNMAS provides EOD and IED disposal training and mentoring across all five sectors of AMISOM (Mogadishu, Dohbey, Baidoa, Belet Weyne, and Jowhar), advice on operational planning processes and specialized equipment and explosive detection dogs to enhance force protection and the Mission's mobility as well as to mitigate the threat of IEDs.