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**United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**  
**Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

**Thematic Session – Mobilizing Resources towards a Mine Free World**  
**(22-24 June 2021)**

*Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva Office, UNMAS*

Mr. President,

This statement is delivered on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)<sup>1</sup>.

The United Nations commends the progress States Parties and their mine action partners have made in spite of the pandemic, which has caused humanitarian needs to increase while putting pressure on donor budgets.

The increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, predominantly by non-state armed groups, have increased demand for mine action expertise and coordination.

In Somalia, from 1 January 2020 to 15 June 2021, there were 714 IED incidents resulting in 1,159 injuries and 707 fatalities. In Iraq, the IEDs left by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) impede humanitarian, stabilization and development efforts. Over one million Iraqis still await to return home safely and in dignity.

In addition, contamination blocks access to hospitals, schools, government buildings, roads, water and sanitation, agricultural land, villages and markets, causing adults and children to spend more time obtaining basic services and, in the case of children, reducing time available for school.

Excellencies,

Yet, against this background, sadly, the financing of mine action is declining. Our Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism that tracks progress towards the UN Mine Action strategy 2019-2023 indicates a decline in funding for mine action in countries where the United Nations is working, from \$248 million in 2019 to \$202 million in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.



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When funding is limited, coordination is essential to ensure efficiencies within and across mine action programmes.

For instance, in Iraq, the demand for support of coordination has risen, and UNMAS has made tremendous efforts to foster strong coordination among local mine action authorities and other humanitarian mine action actors and to transfer skills and knowledge from international to local NGOs.

In Somalia, UNMAS analysis and coordination with partners have helped to identify and restrict access to key precursor materials used in the construction of IEDs, thereby supporting stability in Somalia through the prevention of IED attacks.

Excellencies,

A well-functioning coordination mechanism such as the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR), part of the Global Protection Cluster, strengthens collaboration with other sectors and clusters such as Food Security, Health, and Logistics, and other Areas of Responsibility like Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence, and Housing, Land and Property. The MA AoR in Iraq played critical roles to coordinate with the Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster as well as the national authorities when the closure of a camp for internally displaced people was announced. It helped identify and prioritize the provision of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) sessions to the internally displaced people before returning home. Similarly, humanitarian partners coordinate with the MA AoR to report explosive incidents affecting civilians and/or explosive contamination that challenge other humanitarian projects such as food security or home rehabilitation activities.

Excellencies,

This pandemic highlighted the utility of unearmarked, multiyear financial support.

This is why the United Nations asks affected and donor States Parties to scale up mine action and adopt new funding models to accelerate the pace.

Seeking to fulfil the obligations under the Convention to reach our common goal of a world free from the threat of mines cannot wait.

Thank you  
END.