

Presentation of this year's resolution on Assistance in mine action

at the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) meeting

24 October 2023, 9:30 am

Excellences,

Distinguished Colleagues,

[general remarks]

At the outset I would like to express our gratitude to the Permanent Mission of Italy for hosting today's meeting of the Mine Action Support Group. I would like to thank organizers for this opportunity to present this year's resolution on Assistance in mine action, that was approved by the Fourth Committee on October 12.

I would like to underline the importance of mine action to my country, Poland. We have a long history of supporting mine action and offering assistance to the affected states. We strongly believe that mine action is crucial for the achievement of 2030 Agenda. Demining is a necessary step to ensure delivery of humanitarian aid and a key in ensuring that communities can regain safe and dignified lives.

[introduction]

I will start with the brief overview of the resolution. The document is negotiated and adopted every other year by the Fourth Committee. It is traditionally adopted by consensus. The main goal of the resolution is to express support for mine action efforts carried out by the UN community, Member States and other organizations all over the world. It is traditionally facilitated by Poland on behalf of the EU.

This year's negotiations started on September 27th and after two weeks of consultations the delegations reached consensus on the draft resolution. The draft was approved, without a vote, by the Fourth Committee on October 12th. The resolution was co-sponsored by over 50 Member States. I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all countries who participated in the consultation process for their active and constructive approach.

[main elements]

The main goal of the resolution Assistance in Mine Action is to express support for mine action efforts carried out by the Member States, the UN community and other organizations all over the world. We believe that thanks to the common efforts of all delegations the language of the resolution has been strengthened this year.

The draft resolution expresses deep concern about the grave humanitarian and development impact of mines and explosive remnants of war in affected countries, especially for their civilian populations. The resolution highlights the impact on civilians in vulnerable situations, such as refugees and internally displaced persons, children and persons with disabilities. It recognizes the threat of improvised explosive devices to civilian populations, humanitarian personnel, UN personnel, including peacekeepers, and national defense and security forces. In addition, the reference to the impact of explosive ordnance contamination on land cultivation and local resilience has been incorporated in the text.

This year, Member States also agreed to add a reference to the crucial role of mine action in reducing the human cost of weapons, and in this context, the importance of including mine action in the discussions to be led by Member States on "A New Agenda for Peace", presented by the Secretary-General in July 2023.

This year's text also refers to the contribution of mine action to the realization of durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons, including enabling their safe returns and sustainable reintegration.

Additionally, the language on addressing the needs of persons with disabilities has been strengthened further by a new paragraph on establishment of the United Nations Global Advocate for persons with disabilities in conflict and peacebuilding situations, in order to ensure that the voices of persons with disabilities, including those who have been injured from explosive ordnance, are heard.

Furthermore, the resolution addresses the negative impact of extreme weather events and climate change on the protection of civilians from explosive ordnance threats. Finally, it encourages the inclusion of activities that take into account climate and food security, into mine assistance programmes. This is important since these issues pervade much of the UN's work, including mine action.

Last but not least, in the resolution Member States express their appreciation for the resilience shown by the mine action sector, despite various challenges.

Before concluding I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for the substantive support we have received during consultations on this resolution from United Nations Mine Action Service.

[conclusion]

We strongly believe that by adopting this resolution by consensus, the Fourth Committee once again reaffirmed its commitment to promoting collective efforts to enhancing assistance in mine action.