



Statement of the Republic of Croatia on international cooperation and assistance

Eighth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Geneva, 3 – 5 September 2018

Thank you Mr. President.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union (EU).

The jubilee 15th International Symposium “Mine Action 2018”, the annual international gathering of mine action experts, was held under the high patronage of the President of the Republic of Croatia (Madam Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović) from 9th to 12th April 2018. The Symposium drew attendance of 170 participants from 31 countries and 5 continents, representing ministries, state institutions, international organizations, equipment producers, academia and civil society.

For the third time, the role of a partner country was introduced – Bosnia and Herzegovina (a country with mine/ERW problem and a recipient country). The benefit of this concept is the fact that Croatia, as a host, is perceived in the role of a „bridge“ between donor and recipient countries because of its dual experience (from 2011, according to the OECD indexation, Croatia has been a donor country). Against this backdrop, a parallel workshop was held, which included representatives of the Croatian and Bosnian and Herzegovinian mine action systems, who presented their experience in preparation of key documents for mine action activities (national mine action strategy; law on mine action / humanitarian demining), as well as possibilities for cooperation between states and international mine action operators.

During plenary sessions, experts discussed the following topics: global mine action experiences (contamination with mines and ERW); new technologies in mine action; practical examples in victim assistance and risk reduction education; realization of a world without mines by 2025; relation between terrorism and ERW; experiences and methods in countering the threat of IEDs; natural disasters / crisis situations and mine action (explosions of ammunition depots, forest fires, floods etc.).

As a practical part of the Symposium, participants attended a field demonstration that included the use of drone in general survey, the work of mine detection dogs, demonstration of the newest versions of mine detectors, the upgraded version of the dual-sensor ALIS, the device for protection in case of accidental detonations and mobile application for detecting mine suspected areas.

On the margins of the 15th Symposium, the following events were also held: the traditional meeting of the South East Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC); the meeting of the Joint Secretary and partners in the project “Decontamination of war-affected territories along the border between Croatia and Hungary” (De-mine HU-HR II); the meeting of the project “Biological Methods (Bees) for Explosive Detection” which is financed by the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program with participation of the universities from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Kingdom.

Thank you.