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Area clearance, cluster munition risk reduction and VA

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

In September 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions, assuming responsibility and obligation to clear the country of the cluster munition, provide assistance for cluster munition victims and destroy all existing stocks. The implementation of the Convention commenced in March 2011.

Total suspect area under cluster munition in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2019 is 2,8 km² at 40 identified contaminated areas – micro-locations.

Since 2011, Mine Action Centre Bosnia and Herzegovina and Norwegian People's Aid joined their efforts in non-technical survey of areas in BiH contaminated with cluster munition.

The preliminary results from 2011 indicated that there were 140 locations contaminated with cluster munition, with the total area of 12,17km².

The cluster munition clearance and release of the land to local population commenced in 2012.

During this process, in the period of 2012-2019., it has been found out that additional 2,43km² were contaminated with cluster munition at additional 35 locations, which makes total cluster munition contaminated area of 14,61 km².

In the same period, from 2012-2019., through cluster munition clearance and release of the land, 8,21km² of land has been returned to population. During non-technical survey operations, Mine Action Centre BiH teams cooperated with NPA teams, which resulted in separation of non-conventionally contaminated areas, i.e. areas contaminated with items projected in an improvised manner. Such areas will be treated as clearance of non-exploded ordnance (UXO). The total size of those areas is 3,6km².

The work is currently conducted at 14 tasks of the total area of 466.232 m². Operations on the ground are conducted by Norwegian People's Aid, Civilian Protections and Armed Forces BiH.

In 2017., changes and amendments were adopted to SOP (Standard Operational Procedures) for non-technical survey of cluster munition,

Continuous implementation of Mine Risk Education that includes all other lethal remnants from the war enabled the prevention of suffering for population in BiH by any and all explosive items, including cluster munition, and small and light weapons. Since 2012, Mine Action Centre in BiH is constantly working on marking the areas contaminated with cluster munition. At present, over 500 signs have been placed with aim to warn the population of cluster munition.

Since 1992, a total of 195 persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina were victims of cluster munition, 35 of them with lethal outcome. The highest number of casualties occurred in the period from 1992-95, during the wartime events: the total of 172, out of which 31 with lethal outcome.

In 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina established a Mine Victims Assistance Coordination Body tasked with assisting all victims of mines, cluster munition and explosive remnants of war. The Coordination Body was appointed by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of 22 members from the government sector, non-government organizations, ministries from state and entity levels, and from international organizations.

Bosnia and Herzegovina committed itself to fulfil all conditions from this Convention by March 2021. With the assistance of international community, Bosnia and Herzegovina will undertake additional efforts in order to meet this deadline. According to all indicators so far, this deadline is considered feasible.

Thank you for your attention.

Presented by:

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