



**United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
IACG-MA)
Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Geneva 15-18 April 2013**

Statement on Cooperation and Assistance

**Delivered by the United Nations IACG-MA
Tuesday, 16 April 2013**

Mr./Ms.Coordinator (*Mexico and Sweden*),

I deliver the following statement on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA), comprising the 14 United Nations Departments, Agencies, Funds, and Programmes involved in mine action.

Article 6 of the Convention stipulates that each State Party has the right to seek and receive assistance to fulfil their respective obligations and that each State Party, in a position to do so, shall provide technical, material and financial assistance to States Parties affected by cluster munitions. Article 6 also indicates that such assistance may be provided, inter alia, through the United Nations.

The United Nations is currently supporting some twenty States Parties and signatories to the Convention to meet their commitments to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

As a means to improve our capability to support states affected by mine and ERW, including cluster munitions, the members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action in 2012 embarked on a wide consultation process to develop the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. The new UN Strategy was adopted in December.

The Strategy is a consensus document reflecting the views of the UN entities of the IACG-MA. The consultative and participatory process by which it was developed ensured that a wide spectrum of mine action stakeholders had a chance to express their views and expectations of the UN work in mine action.

As the new Strategy outlines, the vision of the United Nations is a world free of the threat of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munitions, where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development and where the human rights and the needs of mine and ERW victims are met and survivors are fully integrated as equal members of their societies.

The mission statement highlights that “the United Nations works with affected states to reduce the threat and impact of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, on peace and security, humanitarian relief, human rights, and socio-economic development; It does so in partnership with civil society, the private sector, international and regional arrangements, and donors with an aim to secure levels of prevention and protection for individuals and communities, at which point UN mine action assistance is no longer requested.

We aim to pursue this through four key strategic objectives focusing on the following:

- (i) reducing risk & socio- economic impact,
- (ii) supporting victim assistance through integration into broader disability frameworks,
- (iii) accelerating the transfer of mine action responsibilities and supporting the building of national capacity, thereby promoting national ownership, and
- (iv) integration into multilateral frameworks and instruments as well as national plans & legislation

The United Nations reaffirms the importance of effective partnerships and emphasizes the imperative to collectively support national efforts. It is the expectation that this multi-year strategy will help strengthen the ability of the United Nations to respond to requests for assistance and to support States Parties to meet their obligations.

As another means of supporting national efforts, the United Nations is developing a tool based on empirical data to identify areas where the potential for the greatest impact is the highest. Building on the Completion Initiative introduced several years ago by the UNDP, United Nations partners are examining ways to further assist affected countries to reach ‘completion’ both with respect to clearance as well as to stockpile destruction obligations under both this Convention and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The United Nations believes that with concerted attention and focused action, many states will be in a position to reach completion within the next five years.

Before closing, we would like to highlight one critical area of assistance – funding. While critical for the success of all our work, there appears to be a general trend for the decline of victim assistance dedicated funding. Some victim organizations are reporting a negative impact in the services they are able to provide to mine and ERW victims as a result of this situation.

While speakers have referenced similar points in the previous session, there is considerable international bilateral funding available in support of national public health and social welfare sectors. This funding, though not at all related to mine action, generates positive results in terms of fulfilling the needs of persons with disabilities and in improving the quality of and accessibility to the required services. More research in this area would be welcome in order to get a clearer picture of this impact.

Thank you,