



## **United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action**

### **Eleventh Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions**

#### **Statement on Clearance and Destruction of Cluster Munitions and Risk Education Geneva, 12 September 2023**

*Delivered by UNMAS*

Mr. President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)<sup>1</sup>, comprising United Nations entities engaged in mine action.

I would like to thank the coordinators on clearance and destruction of cluster munitions remnants and risk education, Guyana and Norway, for their report.

Twenty-eight countries or territories<sup>2</sup> are currently receiving mine action support from the United Nations. In 14 of these, the UN is working to release land contaminated by cluster munitions and destroy cluster munitions stockpiles. However, insufficient funding is posing a significant challenge to progress in several countries.

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<sup>1</sup> The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) brings together United Nations entities involved in mine action. Twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes are members of the IACG-MA: the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 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.

<sup>2</sup> In 2022, there were 28 countries or territories with active United Nations mine action operations according to the data drawn from the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism of the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023.



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Lebanon is a case in point. The UN and its partners have been successful in building the capacity of Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) which has a solid strategy and implementation plan, inclusive policies, updated national standards, efficient clearance operations, and a Mine Action Forum through which partners are coordinated. The severe economic crisis affecting the country has curtailed funding from the national budget and the gap has not been closed by external partners. As a result, Lebanon cannot implement its Article 4 extension plan.

With UNDP's support, Lao PDR is currently clearing ordnance at a faster rate than ever before; casualty numbers are continuing to decrease. Nonetheless, in the face of dwindling financial support to the mine action programme, the Government is reviewing its strategy to continue to increase productivity and diversify its donor base.

In cases such as these, sustained international cooperation and assistance are critical to the success of the Convention.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

Before closing, I wish to emphasize the importance of leadership by affected States, sustained and predictable international and national political and financial support to achieve the Convention's goals.

We count on the States Parties to the Convention to lead by example.

Thank you.