
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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Clearance and destruction of cluster munitions remnants

Mr President,

Survey and clearance are taking place in an increasingly complex operating environment. New contamination resulting from ongoing conflicts is adding to the existing legacy of cluster munition remnants and other explosive ordnance. In some contexts, the scale of the challenge already exceeds available national capacities.

At the same time, States need to be prepared to address previously unknown contamination that may be identified over time, including after completion. The growing evidence of cluster munition submunitions being modified for delivery by drones presents an additional source of concern, as this emerging practice creates new challenges for survey, civilian protection and clearance operations.

As needs grow, making the best possible use of available resources becomes essential. Reliable evidence remains the foundation of effective clearance. States that invest in robust survey, information management and prioritization processes are better positioned to direct resources where they can achieve the greatest impact.

This approach is also reflected in the revised IMAS 07.11 on Land Release, published in January this year. The revised Standard introduces new definitions of direct and indirect evidence and updates land release criteria. Importantly, it also provides greater scope for emerging technologies and methodologies, including remote sensing, to be applied more systematically in both non-technical and technical survey.

Mr President,

Effective land release also depends on strong information management, an area in which the GICHD has long supported affected States. In 2025 alone, the GICHD provided information management support to 25 countries and territories.

In Somalia, for example, we assisted the national authority in safeguarding and migrating historical mine action data into IMSMA Core, standardizing data collection and establishing a national information management working group. By the end of 2025, national and international partners were increasingly relying on a common information base for coordination, prioritization and reporting.

Experiences such as this show that establishing an information management system is only part of the task. National authorities also need the capacities and training required to manage, maintain and use these systems effectively.

This emphasis on national capacity is closely aligned with the GICHD's new Strategy for 2027–2030. Effective national ownership is one of its central objectives, with a particular focus on strengthening the national frameworks, institutions, systems and capacities needed to plan, manage and sustain responses to explosive ordnance.

This becomes increasingly important as contamination evolves. International support will continue to be needed in many contexts, but sustainable progress will depend on national authorities having the capacity to lead and adapt their response over time.

We therefore welcome the comprehensive approach embodied in the Vientiane Capital Action Plan. The Plan recognizes the need to strengthen national capacities to respond to both new and previously unknown contamination, to improve the collection and use of information and evidence, and to make effective use of new technologies. Importantly, it also calls for information management systems to be accompanied by the capacities required to use and maintain them over time.

The GICHD stands ready to support States Parties in translating these commitments into practice.

Thank you.