

Mine Action and Explosive Hazard Management: Humanitarian Impact, Technical Aspects, and Global Initiatives



COURSE AUTHORS

The United Nations Mine Action Service
The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian
Demining



SERIES EDITOR

Harvey J. Langholtz, Ph.D.



Peace Operations Training Institute®

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Cover Photo: UN Photo #142640 by Martine Perret. 4 April 2007. Two deminers trained by Mechem contractor are at work in Mwanga, as part of the activities in observance of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Bunia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo(DRC).

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First edition: 2003

Revised: 2004, 2004

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Foreword

Dear Student:

I am pleased that you have enrolled in the Peace Operations Training Institute Mine Action and Explosive Hazard Management: Humanitarian Impact, Technical Aspects, and Global Initiatives course. This course has been made possible through the significant contributions of the UN Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

In this course, the student will be introduced to the global problem of landmines and explosive hazard management and the ways in which international organizations are approaching the problem. The topics to be studied here include the guidelines for ceasefires and peace agreements; the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa MBT); the convention on Cluster Munitions and Certain Conventional Weapons (Amended protocol II and Protocol V); landmine and UXO safety training; identifying landmines and UXOs; International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and International Ammunition technical Guidelines (IATG) and guidelines for application; victim assistance; International Standards for Mine Risk Education; Mine Action Information; and an introduction to Improvised Explosive Device (IED) awareness.

The global problem of landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) has received considerable attention in the press and in public awareness. This attention is deserved because of the nature of the problem. Landmines and ERW are indiscriminate killers. When they are left behind following a conflict, they remain a threat to humanitarian workers, civilians, and all who toil to bring a nation out of war and back to self-sufficiency. Fields cannot be tilled, roads cannot be travelled, and crops cannot be brought to market until these items have been cleared. Often it is children and the poor who encounter mines while they go about their innocent lives. At a minimum, these explosions maim their lower extremities — but often cause much greater devastation, including death. Even when the hostilities of war are long past, these devices represent a lingering cruelty and an obstacle to recovery.

It is this issue and this cruelty that the authors of this course and others seek to confront. By studying this course, the student will see what measures organizations and the international community are taking to address the disposal of landmines and explosive remnants of war. The student will also learn what contributions remain to be made.

–Harvey Langholtz,

Executive Director, Peace Operations Training Institute

Method of Study

This self-paced course aims to give students flexibility in their approach to learning. The following steps are meant to provide motivation and guidance about some possible strategies and minimum expectations for completing this course successfully:

- Before you begin studying, first browse through the entire course. Notice the lesson and section titles to get an overall idea of what will be involved as you proceed.
 - The material is meant to be relevant and practical. Instead of memorizing individual details, strive to understand concepts and overall perspectives in regard to the United Nations system.
 - Set personal guidelines and benchmarks regarding how you want to schedule your time.
 - Study the lesson content and the learning objectives. At the beginning of each lesson, orient yourself to the main points. If possible, read the material twice to ensure maximum understanding and retention, and let time elapse between readings.
 - At the end of each lesson, take the End-of-Lesson Quiz. Clarify any missed questions by rereading the appropriate sections, and focus on retaining the correct information.
 - After you complete all of the lessons, prepare for the End-of-Course Examination by taking time to review the main points of each lesson. Then, when ready, log into your online student classroom and take the End-of-Course Examination in one sitting.
- » ***Access your online classroom at***
<www.peaceopstraining.org/users/user_login>
from virtually anywhere in the world.
- Your exam will be scored electronically. If you achieve a passing grade of 75 per cent or higher on the exam, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. If you score below 75 per cent, you will be given one opportunity to take a second version of the End-of-Course Examination.
 - A note about language: This course uses English spelling according to the standards of the Oxford English Dictionary (United Kingdom) and the United Nations Editorial Manual.

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- Access to all of your courses;
- A secure testing environment in which to complete your training;
- Access to additional training resources, including multimedia course supplements;
- The ability to download your Certificate of Completion for any completed course; and
- Forums where you can discuss relevant topics with the POTI community.

LESSON
1

The Global Landmine Problem and the United Nations Response



UNICEF/NYHQ2004-0763/Dan Thomas

Landmines were originally developed for military use, but they have had a profound and long-lasting impact on ordinary people and their communities.

In this lesson »

Section 1.1 Global Overview

Section 1.2 Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy

Section 1.3 The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018

Lesson Objectives »

- Discuss the general history of landmines: why they were originally developed, how they have been used throughout history, and how their impact has changed with advances in technology.
- Identify global locations with landmine and ERW problems and programmes.
- Understand why attention to global landmine/ERW problems is vital.
- Be familiar with the primary text of Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy (A/53/496).
- Understand the meaning of the term “mine action” and be able to identify the five main components of UN mine action.
- Be aware of the guiding principles for mine action.
- Appreciate the responsibilities and coordination mechanisms of and among UN partners, like-minded partners, and liaison groups.
- Recall the types of resources, both financial contributions and in-kind donations (material, equipment, personnel, and services), needed to support mine action and how these resources are monitored and reported.
- Be familiar with the primary text of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018.
- Understand the “vision” and the “mission statement” of UN mine action.
- Be aware of the four strategic objectives of mine action.



Brazilian soldiers of UNEF in Egypt being instructed by Lt. L.G. Lessa on dealing with a landmine. 1 April 1959. UN Photo #143196 by JG.

Section 1.1 Global Overview¹

“Eliminating the threat of mines and explosive remnants of war is a crucially important endeavour that advances peace, enables development, supports nations in transition and saves lives. United Nations mine action programmes continue to create space for humanitarian relief efforts, peace operations and development initiatives, allowing UN staff to deploy and refugees and internally displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes.”

–United Nations Secretary-General,
Ban Ki-moon, April 2013

1) Portions of this section are drawn from *Landmines: The World Takes Action*, a CD-ROM produced by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and available from UNMAS upon request. For more information visit <www.unmas.org>.



Debris including unexploded ordnance (UXO) commonly pollutes communities following conflict. Civilians living in the region are most affected by these dangerous weapons. (Photo: MONUSCO/ Sylvain Liechti)

Overview

Landmines were originally developed for military use, but they have had a profound and long-lasting impact on ordinary people and their communities. Long after conflicts end, mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to kill and maim, often making it impossible for refugees and internally displaced people to return to their homes and prolonging suffering for everyone in the affected areas.

During several recent conflicts, landmines have been deliberately used to target civilian populations. As a result, mines may be found in places of little or no military value, such as schools or agricultural fields. For individuals and communities alike, many of whom are already living in poverty and insecurity, the impact of landmines is not simply physical, it is also psychological, social, and economic. Long after conflicts have ended, the legacy of landmines remains, but the problem is being addressed and the threat is lessening. Globally coordinated programmes designed to tackle the threat of landmine and ERW contamination, and the impact of these explosive weapons, are continuing to grow and develop in the 21st century.

History of Landmines

Landmines have had a long history, dating back to the Greek and Roman empires. However, it is during the Second World War that antipersonnel and antitank landmines started to be widely used. They were then used for defensive and tactical purposes to achieve military objectives. Troops typically mapped the location of the minefields for future clearance, even though many of the mines laid were not immediately cleared. In many countries, a residual threat still exists from the Second World War.

Advances in technology in the 1960s made it possible to scatter mines mechanically rather than planting them by hand. This meant that hundreds of landmines could be deployed at the same time using aircraft, rockets, or artillery. While a troop of 30 men could lay approximately 50 mines per hour, one remote delivery system could scatter over 200 mines at the same time. During the Vietnam War, vast areas of land in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia were completely saturated with mines using these delivery systems.

As conflicts became more brutal, the effect of landmines was no longer strictly limited to military targets. In the 1980s, mines proliferated as the weapon of choice in many internal conflicts. The low cost of antipersonnel mines made them particularly appealing to guerrilla and military forces in developing countries. The production of smaller and more sophisticated landmines and the development of homemade devices caused their prolific use. Plastic mines, which cannot be identified with metal detectors, also became common. Civilians became targets because antipersonnel landmines were used intentionally to harass and terrorize them, forcing them to leave their homes and blocking access to important infrastructure like water and electricity. These factors, but most of all the indiscriminate use of landmines, led to a global crisis.

In 1992, six humanitarian organizations joined together to create the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). From their work in mine-affected countries, they had seen first-hand the horrendous toll landmines take on innocent people in countries where conflict has already caused so much pain. The work of ICBL, which grew to a membership of more than 1400 non-governmental organizations, in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations, and governments worldwide, aims to bring the history of landmines to a close.

The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and its coordinator Ms. Jody Williams in 1997 drew worldwide attention to the problem of landmines. The Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention entered into force the following year. As of August, 2014, 162 of the world’s countries were party to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, which bans the use, development, production, stockpiling, and transfer of antipersonnel landmines (see Lesson 2). All of the European Union and all States in Sub-Saharan Africa are now States Parties. This may have given the impression that the landmine challenge has been met and that the media and governments can start turning their attention to other problems. This is unfortunately not the case. Landmines affect over 50 of the world’s countries. Millions of landmines are still lying in the ground, and claim thousands of innocent victims every year. In several countries, landmines continue to be used as indiscriminate weapons of war.

Landmine/UXO/ERW Problems in the World Today

Africa	Americas	Asia-Pacific	Europe/Central Asia	Middle East/ North Africa
Angola	Argentina*	Afghanistan	Armenia	Algeria
Chad	Chile	Bhutan	Azerbaijan	Egypt
DR Congo	Colombia	Cambodia	Bosnia & Herz.	Iran
Eritrea	Cuba	China	Croatia	Iraq
Ethiopia	Ecuador	India	Cyprus	Israel
Mali	Peru	Lao PDR	Denmark	Lebanon
Mauritania	Venezuela	Myanmar	Georgia	Libya
Mozambique		North Korea	Kyrgyzstan	Morocco
Niger		Pakistan	Russia	Syria
Senegal		South Korea	Serbia	Yemen
Somalia		Sri Lanka	Tajikistan	<i>Palestine</i>
South Sudan		Thailand	Turkey	<i>Western Sahara</i>
Sudan		Vietnam	United Kingdom*	
Uganda		<i>Taiwan</i>	Uzbekistan	
Zimbabwe			<i>Kosovo</i>	
<i>Somaliland</i>			<i>Nagorno-Karabakh</i>	
15 States and 1 area	7 States	13 States and 1 area	14 States and 2 areas	10 States and 2 areas

Impact of Landmines and ERW

“The landmine is eternally prepared to take victims. In common parlance, it is the perfect soldier, the ‘eternal sentry.’ The war ends, the landmine goes on killing.”

–Jody Williams, 1997 Nobel Peace Prize laureate for her work to ban landmines through the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Years of war have left millions of landmines and ERW scattered in more than 50 countries worldwide. In war and in peace, civilians are their most common victims. Subsistence farmers, refugees, and people displaced by war are most often affected. The world’s poor suffer the harshest consequences, facing danger every day to cultivate their fields, herd animals, and collect firewood or even water. To survive daily and access basic resources, they may be forced into dangerous mined areas. In many countries, women and children are responsible for carrying out these tasks. Many landmine victims are unable to reach medical treatment in time, since access to appropriate care is limited in remote and impoverished areas.

The impact of landmines and ERW extends beyond individual accidents and casualties. Vast areas of former battlefields have created acute social, economic, and environmental harm by denying access to productive areas for civilian use. Landmines and ERW negatively impact development and obstruct post-conflict rebuilding, denying access to healthcare and education. Fertile agricultural land becomes useless. Mined irrigation systems and wells make it impossible to farm and maintain herds. Mined dams and electrical installations seriously reduce the ability of a nation to produce the power required for industry. Mined transportation systems interrupt the movement of people and the flow of goods and services throughout the country. Mined roads and the destruction of infrastructure make it difficult, and sometimes impossible, for humanitarian assistance to reach affected communities.

Unless landmines and ERW are cleared, the lives of individuals, communities, and nations cannot return to normal. In most mine-affected countries, the institutional, technical, and financial capacity does not exist to cope with the problem alone. Strong and centralized mechanisms are needed to promote cooperation and to gather and disseminate information available about the local landmine and ERW contamination to affected populations. The international community, including the United Nations and its non-governmental partners, help countries clear mines and ERW, develop mine awareness programmes for affected countries (see Lesson 6), assist with victim assistance (see Lesson 5), destroy stockpiles, and advocate for a global ban on landmines (see Lesson 2).

The goal of all these activities is to reduce the impact of the landmine and ERW problem on people, on their families, on their communities, and on their nations.

Mine action is about making people feel safe again. It is about the human right to live free from the threat and impact of landmines.

As of 2012, landmines have been found in 59 countries, as well as six other areas worldwide, according to the Landmine Monitor Report.² All but one — Mali — had antipersonnel mine contamination.

2) The table on this page and the data contained therein are drawn from the *Landmine Monitor Report 2012*, a publication of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Page 18. Note: States not party to the Mine Ban Treaty are indicated in bold. Other areas are indicated in italics. *Argentina and the United Kingdom (UK) both claim sovereignty over the Falkland Islands/Malvinas, which still contain mined areas.

Anti-personnel (AP) landmine, obscured by leaves, shown with matchbox for scale. Mines left in the ground are very hard to locate and can remain active for decades. (Photo: MOD Crown Copyright)



Every two years, the United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution on mine action and the Secretary-General writes a report on mine action.³ The latest resolution on Assistance in Mine Action [A/Res/68/72] was adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 2013 during their 68th session.

The resolution builds on the foundations laid out by agreed language of the previous resolutions and, in particular, introduces new language that highlights the following areas:

- Recognizes the UN Strategy 2013-2018 and the UN efforts regarding its implementation (and according to the informal negotiations on the resolution the inherent emphasis therein on M&E);
- Uses explicit language related to victim assistance and on its integration into other sectors such as health care and disabilities, along with recognizing the needs and rights of persons with disabilities;
- Includes enhanced language in support of gender considerations, including with reference to the full and effective participation of men and, in particular, women;
- Includes reference to the importance of supporting rapid response;
- Recognizes the enhanced coordination in addition to cooperation by the UN with stakeholders, as well as the active involvement of the UN in strengthening the humanitarian coordination mechanism;
- Recognizes the importance to eliminate the humanitarian impact of these weapons;
- Requests (where possible) multi-annual contributions, including to the UN, and highlights ongoing requirements for rapid response in addition to victim assistance and MRE;
- Encourages the UN to continue to improve coordination, efficiency, transparency and accountability, in particular by implementing the UN Strategy; and
- Encourages support for measures aimed at improving rapid response capacity as well as transparency and accountability.

Member States also 'took note' of the Report of the Secretary-General. Member States have also requested the Secretary-General to report again at the 70th session of the General Assembly, in two years time. Overall, mine action continues to have a very solid basis for its work and focus and reflects the current collective focus in many areas.⁴

3) The final resolution and the Secretary-General report are available in the appendix.

4) For more details on views expressed by Member States during the open debate, please see <<https://papersmart.unmeetings.org/ga/fourth/68th-session/agenda/48/>>.

The report of the Secretary-General on Assistance in Mine Action covers the period from August 2011 until July 2013. It was submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/69 (2012), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General submit a report on progress in the implementation of its resolutions on assistance in mine action, including on relevant UN policies and activities.

The report was prepared by UNMAS, as the UN system-wide leader, convener, and coordinator of mine action, in coordination with members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action, who provided input for the initial draft and commented on earlier versions of the report. UNMAS also consulted internally within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), with its field presences, and with relevant colleagues in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA).

The report strives to demonstrate the people-centred approach of mine action. While mine action has fallen off the radar of the international community, it is a sector that truly demonstrates, on a daily basis, the United Nations potential to “Deliver as One.”

The report begins with an update on efforts to promote the universalization and implementation of international legal instruments related to mine action. It welcomes achievements to date and calls for continued efforts to universalize these instruments.

After addressing efforts at integrating mine action into UN peacekeeping operations and into humanitarian and development programming, the report provides an overview of existing mine action coordination and rapid response mechanisms. Further, the report details achievements including the development of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. It notes how the Strategy reaffirms the importance of effective partnerships and takes into account all areas of mine action responses.



A danger sign indicates the spot where an unexploded grenade has been found in a residential area of Goma. Alerted by residents, UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) contractor team, Mechem, is dispatched to conduct a grenade destruction operation. Since the latest fighting between FARDC and M23 rebels, UNMACC has destroyed 2,675 unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and 51,490 small arms ammunitions (SAA) found in and around the city. 26 February 2013. UN Photo #543537 by Sylvain Liechti.

While acknowledging that mine action has made significant strides, the report expresses concern for new mine usage reported in Afghanistan, Colombia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Syria, Thailand, and Yemen, and reports of cluster munition usage in Libya and Syria. To address the residual threat posed by landmines, explosive remnants of war, and cluster munitions, the report encourages UN mine action partners to continue to work together in the development and implementation of advocacy, clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance programmes and policies, guided by the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018.

Further, the report notes that, as the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war diminishes, new threats have emerged, such as those posed by improvised explosive devices, obsolete and poorly managed ammunition stockpiles, and the circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons. In view of the expertise and capacity developed since its establishment, the report suggests that UNMAS can play an important role in addressing these threats, in cooperation with other relevant UN agencies.

Recognizing this evolving mine action landscape, the report concludes with a set of actionable recommendations for the attention of the General Assembly, including enhanced cooperation among United Nations mine action partners in the area of ammunition stockpile management, updating the United Nations policy on victim assistance, and addressing the continued threats posed by improvised explosive devices and illicit small arms and light weapons.

Section 1.2 Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy

Overview

In October 1998, the Secretary-General of the United Nations submitted a mine action policy document to the General Assembly as part of his report on assistance in mine clearance (A/53/496). The mine action policy document, entitled *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy* introduces three complementary principles. First, it aims to foster the ability of the United Nations to support affected countries and populations in responding to the immediate and long-term problems posed by landmines. Second, it aims to foster the ability of the United Nations to support and build upon collective efforts of the international community at large. Third, it aims to strengthen the credibility of the United Nations in terms of transparency, accountability, and effectiveness.⁵

The policy document, which you will read in its entirety on the following pages, introduces the global landmine crisis and recognizes that the United Nations has a central role in responding to this crisis. It discusses the nature of mine action and details the guiding principles for mine action, coordination, and development. It identifies the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) as the focal point within the UN for all mine-related activities. In addition, it lists the roles and responsibilities of other UN and like-minded partners in responding to the global landmine crisis. The intent in creating the policy document *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy* was to sum up the key principles on which UN mine action is based and to clarify roles and responsibilities within the United Nations system.⁶

5) See *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy*, Sec. II, 4.

6) See *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy*, Sec. I, 3.



Mine clearance and survey operations require the coordination of many organizations and individuals. Making mine and UXO-affected land safe for use is a long process requiring tedious and careful work by trained professionals. (Photo: UNMAS/Marc Vaillant)

On the following pages, you will have the opportunity to read the primary text of Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy dated 14 October 1998 and submitted by the Secretary-General to the fifty-third session of the General Assembly as part of his report on assistance in mine clearance. Before you begin reading the document, take a moment to read the resolution (A/53/26) from the General Assembly, adopted on 17 November 1998. This resolution was a response from the General Assembly, welcoming the policy document Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Policy.

United Nations Mine Action and the Use of the Militaries

“In dealing with the landmine problem, the United Nations will respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and humanity so that priority is given to those who are most vulnerable. Training or support for mine action will not, in principle, be provided to the militaries of mine-contaminated countries.”⁷

The following guidelines⁸ concerning UN involvement with the militaries of mine-contaminated countries for mine-action activities have been developed to complement the UN mine-action policy. They have been approved by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action during a meeting chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on 25 January 1999.

7) *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the United Nations Policy*, A/53/496, Annex II, para. 10, 14 October 1998.

8) *The Role of the Military in Mine Action*, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Geneva, June 2003.

Resolution A/53/26 on Assistance in Mine Action

Adopted on 17 November 1998

A/RES/53/26

Page 5

7. *Emphasizes again* the important role of the United Nations in the effective coordination of mine-action activities, including those by regional organizations, and welcomes in this regard the policy on mine action and effective coordination developed by the Secretary-General in annex II to his report,⁸ which encapsulates the key principles on which United Nations mine action is based and clarifies roles and responsibilities within the United Nations system;

8. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to develop further a comprehensive mine-action strategy, taking into consideration the impact of the landmine problem on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of assistance in mine action by the United Nations, and emphasizes in this respect the importance of further multisectoral assessments and surveys;

9. *Welcomes* the creation of the United Nations Mine Action Service within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, its designation as the focal point for mine action within the United Nations system, and its ongoing collaboration with and coordination of all mine-related activities of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

10. *Urges* Member States, regional, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to extend full assistance and cooperation to the Secretary-General and, in particular, to provide him with information and data as well as other appropriate resources that could be useful in strengthening the coordination role of the United Nations in mine action, particularly in mine awareness, training, surveying, mine detection and clearance, scientific research on mine-detection and mine-clearance technology, and assistance to victims, including information on and distribution of medical equipment and supplies;

11. *Calls upon* Member States, especially those that have the capacity to do so, to provide the necessary information and technical and material assistance, as appropriate, and to locate, remove, destroy or otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines, booby traps and other devices in accordance with international law, as soon as possible;

12. *Urges* Member States and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations that have the ability to do so to provide, as appropriate, technological assistance to mine-infested countries and to promote scientific research and development on humanitarian mine-clearance techniques and technology so that mine-clearance activities may be carried out more effectively at lower cost and through safer means and to promote international collaboration in this regard;

13. *Encourages* Member States and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to support ongoing activities to promote appropriate technology, as well as international operational and safety standards for humanitarian mine-clearance activities, including the early follow-up of the International Conference on Mine-Clearance Technology;⁹

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session a report on the progress achieved on all relevant issues outlined both in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and in the present resolution, and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance and other demining programmes;

⁹ See A/51/472, annex.

Mine Action and Effective Coordination: UN Policy (A/53/496)

A/53/496

Annex II

Mine action and effective coordination: United Nations policy

I. Introduction

1. Years of conflict have left millions of scattered and unrecorded landmines in more than 50 countries.^a Civilians, children as well as adults, are more and more often targets of these sly weapons in times of war, and have become by the thousands victims of their deadly legacy in times of peace. Landmines have caused the removal of vast areas of land and resources from productive use. Countries with weak or barely existing social and economic infrastructures are often the hardest hit, and within these countries the poor are those who suffer the most and are least able to cope.

2. There is growing awareness within the international community that what has come to be known as the global landmine crisis has far-reaching consequences and requires a multifaceted and integrated response. There is also recognition that the United Nations has a key role to play in articulating this response and in providing the necessary support and coordination mechanisms. This role was reaffirmed in the successive resolutions of the General Assembly on assistance in mine clearance,^b as well as in the amended Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed To Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects^c and in the landmark Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, opened for signature at Ottawa on 3 December 1997.

3. In conformity with the expectations of affected populations, the United Nations has accumulated a great deal of experience in mine action. Programmes have been established in various countries, starting with Afghanistan in 1988 and then in Cambodia in 1992. In the light of this experience and of lessons learned, the present paper was developed to encapsulate the key principles on which United Nations mine action is based and to clarify roles and responsibilities within the United Nations system.

II. Objectives

4. The objectives of the principles developed in the present paper are threefold and complementary, that is:

(a) To foster the ability of the United Nations to support, in a coordinated, timely and effective manner,

affected countries and populations in responding to the immediate and long-term problems posed by landmines;

(b) To foster the ability of the United Nations to support and build upon the collective efforts of the international community at large;

(c) To strengthen the credibility of the United Nations in terms of transparency, accountability and effectiveness.

III. Nature of mine action

5. Mine action refers to all activities geared towards addressing the problems faced by populations as a result of landmine contamination. It is not so much about mines as it is about people and their interaction with a mine-infested environment. Its aim is not technical, that is, to survey, mark and eradicate landmines, but rather humanitarian and developmental, that is, to recreate an environment in which people can live safely, in which economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine contamination, and in which the needs of victims are addressed.

6. A distinction has sometimes been made between operational mine action (i.e., mine action in support of operations mandated by the Security Council), humanitarian mine action, and mine action in support of reconstruction and development. The United Nations does not adhere to this distinction, since it does not reflect the fact that there is considerable overlapping among the various aspects of a country's recovery, that is, peacekeeping and peace-building, reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons, revival of communities, reconstruction and development. What really matters is the establishment of clear priorities in relation to the needs of the affected populations.

7. Given the importance of an integrated and holistic response to the issue of landmine contamination and the need to bring real and lasting support to those at risk, United Nations mine action encompasses four complementary core components: (a) mine awareness and risk reduction education; (b) minefield survey, mapping, marking and clearance; (c) assistance to victims, including rehabilitation and reintegration; (d) advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support a total ban on anti-personnel landmines. In support of these core components, other activities will be a key to the success of mine action and mine-

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action programmes, such as resource mobilization, national/local capacity-building and the requisite institutional support (including human resource development of local counterparts from both government and civil society), information management (including the conduct of assessment missions, surveys and, more generally, data-gathering), training of personnel (in all mine-related responsibilities, including management) and quality management (including setting of standards and programme monitoring and evaluation).

IV. Guiding principles

A. Scope and nature of the landmine problem

8. Landmines are first and foremost a humanitarian concern and must be addressed from this perspective. They are also an impediment to rehabilitation and sustainable development. The nature and scope of the landmine problem must be defined in terms of its humanitarian, public health and socio-economic implications, including, in particular, its impact on lives, livelihoods, the provision of humanitarian assistance and, more generally, an environment which should be safe and conducive to peace-building, reconstruction and development.

9. All relevant information on landmine contamination and its humanitarian and socio-economic consequences should be provided to the United Nations Mine Action Service, through the United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators in the field or other partners as appropriate, so that a comprehensive profile of the landmine problem can be developed and early action initiated.

B. Principles for United Nations assistance in mine action

10. In dealing with the landmine problem, the United Nations will respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and humanity so that priority is given to those who are most vulnerable. Training or support for mine action will not, in principle, be provided to the militaries of mine-contaminated countries.

11. The United Nations will take every opportunity to stigmatize the continuing use of landmines and to support a total ban on anti-personnel landmines. In order to receive assistance, relevant parties should be committed to supporting mine action actively, and to desisting from producing, stockpiling, using and transferring anti-personnel landmines.

When applicable, this commitment should form an integral part of peace treaties, ceasefire agreements and peace-building arrangements.

12. Exceptions to the above principle should be based only on humanitarian considerations. Humanitarian mine-action activities which are focused on reducing immediate threats to the well-being of affected communities and to the activities of humanitarian workers should not be subject to conditionalities related to the continuing use of landmines.

C. Notion of integrated and sustainable mine action

13. The United Nations supports a holistic approach to mine action, addressing its various elements in a complementary manner both at the field level and headquarters level. Mine-awareness and risk-reduction education, minefield mapping, marking and clearance, victim assistance and rehabilitation, advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support for a comprehensive ban are all integral parts of mine action.

14. This holistic approach requires that appropriate attention be given to the issues of national ownership, sustainability and capacity-building. In countries which have long-term needs, mine-action programmes must be sustainable and should include as a key component the development of a national/local capacity, from the outset of mine-action activities and throughout the development of integrated programmes. A national/local capacity (formed most often under the auspices of a Government or local authorities) is characterized by its ability to develop and articulate overall policy and direction, as well as to plan, coordinate, manage and sustain a programme that is accountable, cost-effective and able to address the humanitarian and socio-economic implications of landmine contamination.

15. Mine-action initiatives must also be an integral component of strategies designed to rehabilitate health care, education, infrastructure, agriculture and marketing systems, to name but a few of the requirements of societies recovering from violent conflicts.

D. Requirement for effective coordination

16. To ensure effective coordination within the United Nations system, all mine-action activities will be organized in consultation with the United Nations Mine Action Service

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and with the United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators in the field, as appropriate.

17. When programmes are initiated in the field, coordination mechanisms should be established to ensure that strategic and forward planning takes place and that country-wide mine-action activities are consistently integrated, monitored and reviewed (this includes mine awareness in refugee camps in neighbouring countries and mine clearance related to peacekeeping missions, when applicable).

18. As part of these coordination mechanisms, a database should be developed and a level 1 survey (followed by a level 2 survey) should be undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity.

19. Donors, non-governmental organizations, and other entities concerned with the problem of landmines should be encouraged to coordinate their activities with the United Nations Mine Action Service and with the United Nations and local authorities responsible for mine action in the field.

20. The United Nations Mine Action Service will ensure that regular monitoring and lessons-learned missions are conducted, and that insights gained from particular experiences are shared with all interested parties.

E. Initiation and development of mine-action programmes in the field

21. Action to address the mine problem must begin as early as possible when there is a recognized need. It should include, in particular, assessments and level 1 surveys, awareness and risk-reduction education, assistance to victims and advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines.

22. Without prejudice to the existing mandates and accountability of agencies, all requests for assistance in mine action should be reviewed in consultation with the United Nations Mine Action Service. When justified by the circumstances, and as a first step of a United Nations response, the United Nations Mine Action Service should, as soon as possible and in consultation with the United Nations Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, organize a multidisciplinary and multisectoral assessment to define the scope and nature of the problem, to identify constraints and opportunities relating to the development of mine-action initiatives and to make recommendations for a comprehensive response, including institutional arrangements for the coordination and implementation of mine-action activities.

23. The primary responsibility for taking action against the presence of landmines lies with the concerned State. Thus,

in principle, the Government of the affected country should assume overall responsibility for the coordination and management of a national mine-action programme. When required, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in consultation with all stakeholders, including the United Nations Mine Action Service, relevant local partners, non-governmental organizations, donors and United Nations entities, should assist in creating sustainable national capacities and in preparing and implementing an overall programme plan.

24. In circumstances in which the United Nations has to initiate a programme under its auspices, either because of the requirement to meet urgent humanitarian and operational needs or because of the absence of recognized national authorities, the United Nations Mine Action Service will develop the initial programme plan, in consultation with all stakeholders, including relevant local partners, non-governmental organizations, donors and United Nations entities. This plan should clearly define objectives, priorities, institutional arrangements and other requirements, including technical and financial support, as well as modalities to undertake specific activities. It should be designed to meet critical urgent needs, as well as the long-term requirements essential for the development of a sustainable national/local capacity, when applicable.

25. When required, transitional arrangements for the provision of United Nations support to the ongoing development of a sustainable national/local capacity in mine action should be identified and clearly defined at the earliest stage in order to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities. Such arrangements should be decided on a case-by-case basis but will normally be implemented when the national authority assumes responsibility for the coordination and management of the overall mine-action programme originally developed under United Nations auspices.

26. Whenever practical and in order to facilitate the transition process when required, the United Nations entity responsible for providing logistical, financial and administrative support to a mine-action programme during the initiation phase will continue to be responsible for this support throughout the development of the programme.

F. Requirement for prioritization and accountability

27. All programmes should have well-established mechanisms to set priorities for mine-action activities on the basis of need and the most effective use of available resources. While it must be remembered that no two

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situations are alike, priorities for mine clearance will often include, *inter alia*, the following: provision of emergency assistance; settled land with high civilian casualty rates; land required for the resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons; land required for agriculture; community development; access to and free operation of health services; reconstruction; and infrastructure development.

28. Clearly-defined accountability mechanisms should also be incorporated in programmes in order to ensure that priority needs are met and that there is cost-effective use of available resources. Periodic review exercises should also be undertaken in order to determine overall effectiveness in approach, orientation and implementation, and to advise on which changes, if any, need to be introduced.

V. Responsibilities and coordination mechanisms

A. Role and responsibilities of United Nations partners

Mine Action Service

29. The Mine Action Service, Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat, is the focal point within the United Nations system for all mine-related activities. In this capacity, it is responsible for ensuring an effective, proactive and coordinated United Nations response to landmine contamination. The Service, in consultation with other partners, will establish priorities for assessment missions, facilitate a coherent and constructive dialogue with the donor and international communities on the mine issue and coordinate the mobilization of resources. It is also responsible for: (a) the development, maintenance and promotion of technical and safety standards (a responsibility which will be delegated to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with regard to mine awareness and to the World Health Organization (WHO) with regard to the public health aspect of victim assistance); (b) the collection, analysis and dissemination of mine-related information, including information on technology; (c) advocacy efforts in support of a global ban on anti-personnel landmines; and (d) for the management of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

Department for Disarmament Affairs

30. The Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, in collaboration with the Mine Action Service and other entities of the Organization, will support

the role of the Secretary-General in relation to the Ottawa Convention. The specific responsibilities of the Department relate to the provisions of two articles: article 7, on transparency measures, and article 8, on facilitation and clarification of compliance.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

31. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is responsible for sharing all relevant information with the Mine Action Service and other partners regarding the humanitarian implications of landmines. It will work to ensure that humanitarian needs are met as an integral component of the overall humanitarian endeavour. It will advocate a global ban on anti-personnel landmines and for assistance to victims. The Office will also work closely with the Mine Action Service on resource mobilization, in its capacity as manager of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and coordinator of the consolidated appeal process.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

32. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will ensure that the needs of refugees and other populations of concern to UNHCR are met. In particular, it will work with UNICEF to develop appropriate mine-awareness programmes in refugee camps and with the World Food Programme (WFP) for the safe delivery of food.

United Nations Children's Fund

33. The United Nations Children's Fund, working in collaboration with the Mine Action Service, is the United Nations focal point on mine-awareness education. In this capacity, it will provide appropriate guidance for all mine-awareness programmes, in close liaison with concerned partners such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, WFP, UNHCR, WHO and UNDP. In collaboration with WHO, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other partners where appropriate, UNICEF will ensure the comprehensive rehabilitation of landmine victims, which includes psychosocial counselling, physical rehabilitation (including the provision of prosthetics and orthotics) and education for those with disabilities. In addition, UNICEF will continue to be an active advocate for the promotion of a total ban on anti-personnel landmines and the ratification of the Ottawa Convention.

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the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will ensure that the Mine Action Service is consulted.

52. In order to assist donors in determining how best to utilize their resources, the Mine Action Service will prepare each year a comprehensive portfolio of mine-action projects, outlining the resources required for all such projects. This document will take into consideration those projects which are already included in country-specific consolidated appeals, as well as those for which similar resource mobilization mechanisms do not exist. It will be utilized in support of donor meetings and pledging conferences.

53. Implementing agencies will ensure that the necessary mechanisms are established in the field to exchange information on a regular basis with the international community and provide it with updates on the status of United Nations programmes and budget requirements, as well as detailed financial statements of income and expenditure.

54. The Mine Action Service should be provided with the information required to maintain and discuss the portfolio of mine-action projects at any given time with members of the international community, as well as an updated financial summary of past and ongoing mine-related operations (including cash contributions, donations in-kind and secondment of personnel).

B. Support mechanisms

1. Financing mechanisms

55. Although the resources raised for mine action are for the most part channelled through the United Nations system, they may also be channelled through external partners (e.g. non-governmental organizations) if so required for cost-effectiveness purposes.

56. The Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance is used primarily to finance the overall coordination of United Nations mine action, the conduct of assessment missions to monitor the scope of the landmine threat and the programmes established to deal with it, the initiation of new mine-action activities and programmes when and where required, and the bridging of funding delays in ongoing programmes.

57. The Central Emergency Revolving Fund is designed as a cash-flow mechanism to ensure the rapid and coordinated response of the organizations of the United Nations system to requests for emergency assistance. It can be used only to make advances to United Nations organizations and entities. These advances have to be reimbursed as a first charge

against the voluntary contributions received in response to consolidated appeals.

58. For programmes which have to be sustained in the long term, specific trust funds should be established within the financing agency as soon as possible. The objective of these trust funds is to allow for the principles of transparency, accountability and cost-effectiveness to be respected.

59. Mine action in support of peacekeeping operations will continue to be financed exclusively by peacekeeping budgets and resources, to the exclusion of resources drawn from the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

60. The resources of the World Bank are primarily provided on the basis of interest-free credits or loans. Resources are provided directly to Governments, which own the process and are responsible for execution. Many Governments have, to date, chosen to draw upon humanitarian grants for demining. There is, however, significant potential for increased support from the Bank's credits or loans for financing mine action if (a) member Governments decide that this use of the resources of the Bank is appropriate, and (b) borrower Governments require resources for mine action beyond those available from grant sources.

2. Monitoring and reporting to donors

61. Implementing agencies in charge of country programmes are responsible for submitting regular progress and financial reports to donors. These reports should take into consideration cash contributions, as well as in-kind contributions and secondment of personnel. They should provide sufficient details on the origin of the resources made available and on the expenditure incurred against those resources.

62. On an annual basis, the Mine Action Service will prepare a financial statement related to mine action for distribution to the donor community.

Notes

^a Throughout the annex, landmine is used to refer to both landmines and unexploded ordnances.

^b See, in particular, resolution 52/173 of 18 December 1997.

^c Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996.

^d Various guidelines and policy documents have been developed by the community of non-governmental organizations on the landmine issue. Two examples are: (a) the so-called "Bad Honnef guidelines", originally drafted by the German Campaign to Ban Landmines and subsequently discussed and revised at an international Symposium held at



UNMAS 2013 and Beyond >>

This UNMAS video gives an idea of what mine action entails, where UNMAS is working, and what new challenges face the lead United Nations entity on explosive hazards.

Available at: <<http://youtu.be/MsAUTeDo8Ic>>.

United Nations Mine Action and the Use of the Militaries

“In dealing with the landmine problem, the United Nations will respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and humanity so that priority is given to those who are most vulnerable. Training or support for mine action will not, in principle, be provided to the militaries of mine-contaminated countries.”⁹

The following guidelines¹⁰ concerning UN involvement with the militaries of mine-contaminated countries for mine-action activities have been developed to complement the UN mine-action policy. They have been approved by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action during a meeting chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on 25 January 1999.

9) *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the United Nations Policy*, A/53/496, Annex II, para. 10, 14 October 1998.

10) *The Role of the Military in Mine Action*, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Geneva, June 2003.

The Role of the Military in Mine Action

1. International assistance in mine action is often required in countries which are either still torn by internal conflicts to varying degrees (e.g. Afghanistan, Angola, Sudan), or have recently emerged from a conflict situation (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Nicaragua). Even when they respond to the authority of a legitimate government, the armed forces of those countries often operate along party lines and are major political instruments, if not political players themselves.

2. To ensure neutrality, the United Nations has therefore determined that training or support for mine action will not, in principle, be provided to the militaries of mine-contaminated countries. This principle is part of the United Nations policy on mine action (A/53/496, Annex II, para. 10, dated 14 October 1998) which the General Assembly welcomed at its fifty-third session (A/RES/53/26 dated 13 November 1998).

3. The United Nations recognises nonetheless that the militaries of mine-contaminated countries could contribute to humanitarian mine action. They often have the technical expertise and knowledge required for that purpose, as well as operational and logistical capacities. In a number of countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jordan and Nicaragua they are already engaged in mine-clearance endeavours.

The Role of the Military in Mine Action (continued)

4. The United Nations recognises also that the primary responsibility for taking action against the presence of landmines lies with the concerned State. Thus, in principle, the government of the affected country should assume overall responsibility for the coordination and management of a national mine action programme, and determine which implementing mechanisms and arrangements should be established.

5. Even though the United Nations prefers providing assistance to mine action under civilian auspices and civilian implementation mechanisms, there are circumstances where it would be prepared to support government mine action programmes which include collaborative arrangements with the militaries. Such circumstances and support should be considered on a case-by-case basis within the context of the Inter-agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and will adhere to the following guidelines:

5.1. The United Nations will not engage, directly or indirectly, in cooperative or collaborative arrangements with militaries when such arrangements hinder its neutrality and impartiality.

5.2. Unless provided in peace treaties, arrangements with militaries should be restricted to circumstances where the militaries are not party to any conflict, open or latent, local or regional, and they do not have the potential to become party to such conflicts.

5.3. The overall structure of a mine action programme, including its coordination, control and priority-setting mechanisms, should be agreed upon prior to engaging into arrangements with militaries.

5.4. The overall coordination, control and priority setting of mine action should be the responsibility of civilian authorities in country. In particular, priorities for mine action should be established in the context of the humanitarian, reconstruction and development requirements, and result from a concerted effort involving all parties concerned, including the United Nations when its assistance is requested.

5.5. When they are deemed appropriate, arrangements with militaries should be the object of formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) among all parties concerned clearly outlining roles, responsibilities and guiding principles.

5.6. All mine-clearance operations conducted with the support of the United Nations should respect the International Mine Action Standards.

5.7. When and where appropriate, collaboration with militaries can include tasking, quality control, information sharing and logistical support. However, the United Nations will not interfere with established military chains of command and will not provide funding for the salaries of military personnel.



Women Battle Area Clearance (BAC) operators from non-governmental organization Action on Armed Violence, working under a contract from the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), use a large loop detector to locate mines in Mehaires, Western Sahara. 17 June 2010. UN Photo #440156 by Martine Perret.

Section 1.3 The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013–2018

“I have seen the devastation caused by these indiscriminate weapons, which hamper reconstruction, damage the environment and cause grievous injuries and death for decades after conflicts end. My fervent hope is that the world will one day be free from the threats caused by landmines and explosive remnants of war.”

–Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General

Overview

The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013 – 2018 is “people-driven” and reiterates the continuous strong commitment of the UN to saving lives and creating conditions conducive to sustainable peace, security, development, and respect for human rights. The strength of the Strategy resides in the fact that it is the product of an inclusive consultative process led by the UN Mine Action Service and involving all members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action; both affected and donor countries; and practitioners such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. It reaffirms the cross-cutting nature and relevance of mine action to the full range of work of the United Nations. It also acknowledges the evolution of the scope of the concept of mine action, which now encompasses the types of explosive hazards that threaten populations, thus demonstrating the adaptive capacity of the Organization to new situations for an effective response to people’s needs.

The United Nations remains committed to the principles of transparency and accountability when measuring progress and assessing the effectiveness of its mine action projects and programmes in affected States. Efforts to this end will be enhanced by the establishment of a United Nations monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the implementation of the Strategy on Mine Action 2013–2018.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013–2018

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP ON MINE ACTION

Chair: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/ UNMAS

UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA)

UN Development Programme (UNDP)

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Bank*

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)*

*Observer status

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

VISION

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.

“ I have seen the devastation caused by these indiscriminate weapons, which hamper reconstruction, damage the environment and cause grievous injuries and death for decades after conflicts end. My fervent hope is that the world will one day be free from the threats caused by landmines and explosive remnants of war. ”

Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary-General

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

I. INTRODUCTION

Affected states, with the support of the international community, have achieved real progress in addressing the threat of mines and ERWs, including cluster munitions. This has been reflected most notably by the drastic reduction in casualties over the last two decades, as well as by increased national capacity, advances in the universalization of various treaties and conventions and enhanced cooperation amongst mine action actors.

Significant challenges remain but these achievements constitute major opportunities to accelerate the realization of a world free of these threats.

The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018 (“the strategy”) presents the common objectives and commitments that will guide the work of the United Nations in mine action¹ over the next six years in support of this momentum.

As such, the strategy provides analytical and programmatic guidance for the formulation, implementation and revision of United Nations assistance at the country level, in a manner that is consistent with the specific needs, requests and legal regimes of each context.

Throughout, the strategy reaffirms the importance of effective partnerships and emphasizes the imperative for the United Nations to collectively increase the impact of its mine action work across the range of peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development responses.

In addition to regular monitoring and reporting, this strategy will be subject to a mid-term review, to assess progress made and explore the need for any changes in light of, inter alia, the new global framework that may be developed in conjunction with the 2015 Millennium Development Goals World Summit.

¹ Led by members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA).

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

II. THE CONTEXT FOR ENGAGEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN MINE ACTION

This strategy will be implemented taking into account the following:

1. Significant progress has been made. Effective responses have contributed to a substantial reduction in mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, casualties and in the production, use and sales of mines and associated weapons.

Since the entry into force in 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC), the international legal framework for mine action has been bolstered and expanded, notably through the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW Amended Protocol II) in 1998, the Protocol V (ERW) of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) in 2006, and the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008, and of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in 2010.

National capacity to manage the short-term impacts as well as long-term residual threats has also improved, even if international assistance continues to be requested by a number of affected states.

2. The momentum must be sustained to realize the global vision of a world free of the threat of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions. In particular, efforts to achieve universalization and full implementation of all relevant treaties and conventions and ensure consistent reporting on obligations must continue.

Additional investments must be devoted to fully meet the rights and needs of mine and ERW victims, as reflected in respective legal and political commitments². These investments must include the development of adequate of health and social systems, the integration of responses into “national disability, development and human rights frameworks and mechanisms”³, and the provision of socio-economic opportunities for survivors.

² Including the 2010-2014 Cartagena Action Plan and the Vientiane Action Plan.

³ Article V, Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

Further efforts must also be dedicated to strengthening and mainstreaming gender perspectives in mine action planning, implementation and evaluation.

3. Challenges and risks remain. Recent armed conflicts have again exposed populations and lands to threats from mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, as well as to immediate threats of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and of explosive weapons in populated areas. In addition to the significant human and humanitarian costs and impact, these risks further hinder prospects for socio-economic recovery.

4. Responses must remain comprehensive and always focused on people. The variety of threats and impacts highlight the need for greater protection of individuals and communities, including for refugees, displaced persons and returnee populations, from the immediate crisis phase onward. Throughout, the safety of mine action staff, including emergency healthcare providers, and assets must also continue to be a priority.

5. Mine action work is evolving. Mine action actors – UN and partners alike – are increasingly requested to respond to the security and humanitarian hazards posed by various explosive devices by providing assistance, such as weapons and ammunition stockpile security, management and destruction, IED risk and awareness training, and armed violence reduction.

6. Effective responses that meet the needs of people require cost effective programming and results-based evidence. In support of such requirements, data collection and monitoring and evaluation systems are improving, but require consolidation and increased focus on impact.

7. Mine action remains an essential component of the work of the United Nations. The United Nations needs to maintain a clear focus on addressing the impacts of mines and ERW and to further integrate all dimensions of mine action into international assistance frameworks, including the relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and country level post conflict and development plans.

Mine action is relevant across the areas of peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development. In each, the need for immediate post conflict and emergency responses remains as critical as longer-term capacity building support.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

III. THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN MINE ACTION

The United Nations role in mine action is rooted in the UN Charter and further defined in UN resolutions, which consider “mine action to be an important component of United Nations humanitarian and development activities”⁴.

Specific mandate and responsibilities have been given by Member States to a number of UN entities to address the various challenges presented by mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, across a range of contexts from immediate post crisis and emergency responses to long-term capacity development.

Furthermore, UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions have recognized the relevance of mine action across peace and security, humanitarian, human rights, and development pillars. They include those adopted on the protection of civilians, on the protection of children in armed conflict, on women, peace and security, and on the relationship between disarmament and development.

These resolutions consistently refer to the significant role of the UN whilst reaffirming that States have primary responsibility in mine action. In each affected state, UN assistance will therefore shift over time, as well as in nature and intensity, according to needs and requests for assistance, and the comparative advantage of other actors.

⁴ GA Resolutions A/RES/53/26 (1998), A/RES/54/191 (1999), A/RES/55/120 (2000), A/RES/56/219 (2001), A/RES/57/159 (2002), A/RES/58/127 (2003), A/RES/60/97 (2005), A/RES/62/99 (2007), A/RES/64/84 (2009), and A/RES/66/69 (2011).

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

IV. UNITED NATIONS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

For the period 2013-2018, the UN is committed to focus its resources on the following strategic objectives⁵.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Risks to individuals and the socio-economic impacts of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, are reduced.

Indicators:

- % of previously affected land cleared and being used for socio-economic purposes
- % Increase in safe access to basic services, facilities, and vital infrastructure
- % of affected individuals and communities with the information needed to reduce personal risks.

UN specific activities include:

- Facilitate and provide prioritized marking, fencing, technical and non-technical survey, and clearance
- Support and provide mine-ERW risk education
- Coordinate and support immediate emergency responses
- Support ammunition stockpile security, management and destruction
- Support affected states in collecting mine action data, disaggregated by age and gender, and support national information management systems
- Promote gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes

⁵ To this end, baselines and targets will be developed under the strategy's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and ERW victims within broader responses to injury and disability.

Indicators:

- % of affected states that have adopted and implemented a disability policy and plan of action that incorporate all aspects of victims assistance.
- % of affected states provide age and gender sensitive services to ensure psychosocial support, social inclusion, economic reintegration, care and protection for victims⁶
- % Increase in external support to and national budgetary allocations from affected states for the provision of services to mine and ERW, including cluster munitions victims within a broader framework of disability
- % Of affected states that collect, analyze and disseminate data related to mine and ERW related disabilities disaggregated by age and gender

UN specific activities include:

- Advocate for the adoption, adherence to and implementation of laws and public policies that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities including survivors.
- Provide guidance and technical assistance on evidence-based and cost-effective means to improve access to victim's assistance services.
- Mobilize and channel resources for programmes, services and initiatives in support of mine and ERW, including cluster munitions, victims as persons with disabilities
- Support the collection and use of age and gender disaggregated victim data into injury surveillance and information management systems
- Facilitate and assist in the provision of gender and age sensitive psychosocial support, social inclusion, economic reintegration, and care and protection services to victims

⁶ This includes, but is not limited to, relevant information management systems, emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support and social inclusion; economic reintegration, and laws and public policies that promote the rights of all persons with disabilities.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

The transfer of mine action functions to national actors is accelerated, with national capacity to fulfill mine action responsibilities increased.

Indicators:

- % of affected states in which national authorities coordinate mine action activities and directly implement and manage mine action responses
- % of resources for mine action designated under national budget or managed by national authorities
- % of affected states with surveillance and information management systems managed by national authorities
- % of affected states with national strategies and completion plans that articulate milestones.

UN specific activities include:

- Support affected states in developing and implementing national strategies and completion plans with milestones for transition in accordance with their needs and international legal obligations
- Provide technical advice, institutional support, capacity assessments and capacity building to national authorities on mine action activities upon request
- Facilitate the transition from immediate post conflict programming to rights-based prevention, recovery, and protection approaches led by national authorities
- Support the development of national information management and data collection systems, with data disaggregated by age and gender.
- Advocate for inclusion of mine action in national budgets and facilitate the mobilization of resources

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Mine action is promoted and integrated in multilateral instruments and frameworks as well as national plans and legislation

Indicators:

- % of States Parties to mine action treaties and conventions, including the APMBT, the CCM, the CCW (Amended Protocol II and Protocol V), and the CRPD
- % of states who report completely on all mine action related treaties and conventions including the APMBT, the CCM, the CCW (Amended Protocol II and Protocol V) and the CRPD
- % of relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on peace and security, human rights, gender, development, and humanitarian referencing mine action
- % of ceasefire and peace agreements including or reflecting mine action provisions
- % of national development plans, strategies and frameworks that include mine action

UN specific activities include:

- Advocate for the universalization and implementation of mine action conventions, including the APMBT, CCM, CCW and its Protocols, and CRPD
- Promote and support the inclusion of mine action in relevant international policy frameworks and multilateral fora, as well as relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and in peace process/ceasefire negotiations
- Provide policy makers, at national and international levels, with data and context specific analysis on mine action trends and emerging challenges
- Mobilize resources for mine action programmes and activities

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

CROSS CUTTING FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

To fulfill these strategic objectives the UN will carry out cross cutting functions, bearing in mind the following purposes and approaches:

1. Coordination, to improve the coherence, effectiveness and impact of collective responses delivered in support of national authorities and to facilitate effective engagement by international actors.⁷

2. Capacity development, to support affected states in fulfilling their responsibilities and reinforce national ownership, based on demand driven approaches, and by *identifying, mobilizing and providing specific expertise*, including through the use of south-south cooperation opportunities.

3. Data collection and analysis, to support national and international decision-making and the efficient and effective allocation of resources, and with a priority on supporting national data and surveillance systems where possible.

4. Advocacy for global and national mine action goals, including for treaty universalization and implementation, compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL), victim's assistance and its integration into disability frameworks, and the provision of adequate and reliable funding support.

⁷ In-county coordination mechanisms will continue to be supported by global ones such as the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, the Global Protection Cluster and the Inter-Agency Support Group to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, amongst others.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

V. UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP IN MINE ACTION

UN mine action work supports multilateral frameworks⁸ of assistance, and Human Rights based approaches. As such, the UN will implement its strategy in accordance with the following principles of partnership:

- **Clarity** and efficiency through effective and transparent coordination, and open dialogue on needs and requirements of affected states, and UN comparative advantages
- **Sharing of experiences, good practices, and lessons learned** from affected states that have similar experiences
- **Mutual accountability** for commitments and contractual obligations.
- **Transparency**, in resources applied and results achieved, through a strengthened monitoring and evaluation system and recognition of the role and achievements of partners.

Monitoring adherence to these principles is an integral part of the strategy. To this end, the UN will make full use of existing coordination structures to solicit feedback.

⁸ Including the Millennium Development Goals, the New Deal, the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, and the Responsibility to Protect.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

VI. STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS CAPACITY IN MINE ACTION

The UN commits to the following initiatives to strengthen its assistance in mine action.

1. Plan for the transfer of mine action functions to national actors, in consultation with affected states and partners, on the basis of context specific parameters, and in recognition of other partners' contributions.

2. Strengthen the UN division of labor, by making full use of existing mine action coordination mechanisms⁹ at country level, on the basis of comparative advantages, and under the authority of senior UN leadership.

3. Sustain the implementation and monitoring of the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, with particular attention on the collection of mine action data disaggregated by gender and age, and adherence to gender requirements in UN contracting procedures and fund allocation.

4. Update the UN Policy on Victim Assistance, taking into account the new and stronger normative environment for victim assistance and persons with disability and focusing on the integration of victim assistance into broader disability programs and frameworks at the country and global levels.

5. Continue to promote compliance with and the use of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), and supporting regular reviews of such standards to reflect technological changes and emerging situations.

6. Upgrade the substantive and technical skills of UN staff, by developing in particular a cost-effective general induction training for all UN Mine Action staff, building on, and complementing existing UN skill development modules, and focusing, inter alia, on the mainstreaming of mine action in broader responses, best practices in project management and administration, staff security considerations, the use of technology and other deployment requirements.

7. Further strengthen resource management, with a focus on the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of all UN mechanisms established to mobilize and disburse funds for mine action interventions.

⁹ See note on page 17.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The UN considers that identifying the impact of its mine action work is essential to facilitate evidence-based policymaking and results-based management.¹⁰ As such, the UN is committed to establishing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism¹¹ to assess progress made by the UN in the implementation of its vision, strategic objectives and internal initiatives.

The United Nations monitoring and evaluation mechanism will require dedicated resources for its design, operation and maintenance; its operation will also require a commitment to providing country-offices with the funding and support requisite to collect and upload data on a core set of indicators in a timely manner.

Reporting on implementation of the strategic objectives by the United Nations will be done through the biennial reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on Assistance in Mine Action.

¹⁰ Data collection has also emerged as a key element in convention monitoring (e.g. Article 31 of the CRPD).

¹¹ Details provided in the UN Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

VIII. ENABLING FACTORS

The success to be achieved by the United Nations in implementing this strategy also requires the following contributions from its partners:

1. Continued engagement and ownership by *affected states* in determining needs and the type of support required; in integrating mine action, including victim assistance, into national planning and budget processes; in complying with the international mine action normative frameworks and in upholding the principles of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law.

2. Enhanced political support from member states and regional organizations, including by mainstreaming mine action priorities into policies, resolutions, decisions, national plans and other relevant policy frameworks.

3. Sustained and predictable financial support from donors and in national budgets. Such support is necessary for emergency responses as well as for interventions designed to transfer responsibilities to sustainable national systems and institutions. External resources will also be critical to the effective and efficient implementation of this strategy's commitments to increase UN capacity and strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems

4. Increased buy-in from internal UN and external actors to engage with mine action on related interventions (disabilities related health and psychosocial support, protection and promotion of human rights, livelihoods and economic reintegration, education, weapons and ammunition stockpile security and management, community violence) in order to develop comprehensive responses.

5. Regular and substantive participation on the part of NGOs and commercial operators in joint operational responses and/or collective advocacy efforts.

Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action (continued)

IX. CONCLUSION

The vision driving this strategy highlights the multi-dimensional nature of mine action. The UN continuous engagement in all aspects of mine action is essential for facilitating immediate humanitarian efforts, improving peace and security, promoting stabilization, ensuring respect for human rights, and enabling development goals.

The integration of mine action into broader frameworks of international assistance and cooperation is therefore necessary to accelerate progress on mine action specific objectives, as well as to ensure sustainable gains across the spectrum of humanitarian, human rights, peace and security and development responses.

The strategy also represents the UN's dedication to continued coherence and effectiveness, through a set of common objectives and by articulating commitments to strengthen its own capacity. The overall direction and principles provided in this strategy shall serve to inform the UN engagement at headquarters and country level, most notably in devising responses tailored to specific circumstances and requirements of an affected country.

Finally, the substantive engagement of partners is as essential for the strategy's implementation as it has been in its design. The UN looks forward to continuing its collaboration with affected states, donors, NGOs and commercial operators and achieving progress towards its vision and the strategy.

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The United Nations strategy has been developed through extensive consultations, both within the UN and with affected states, donors, NGOs and implementing operators with the aim of ensuring a transparent and comprehensive approach. This process included three internal retreats of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action following the launch of a series of bilateral discussions and feedback through an online questionnaire. A stakeholder consultation session was held in September 2012. Drafts of the strategy were shared with each of these constituents prior to finalization. Under the chairmanship of Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous, DPKO, the Principals of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action endorsed this strategy on 18 December 2012.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

1. **Which of the following is NOT one of the main components of UN mine action?**
 - A. Victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration
 - B. Governmental purchase of mine-infested lands
 - C. Advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support a total ban on anti-personnel landmines
 - D. Mine awareness and risk reduction education
2. **The global landmine problem must be defined in terms of its _____.**
 - A. humanitarian, public health, and socio-economic implications
 - B. humanitarian, religious, and military implications
 - C. religious, public health, and military implications
 - D. socio-economic implications only.
3. **UNMAS (United Nations Mine Action Service) is _____.**
 - A. an organization providing food and shelter to victims of landmines
 - B. concerned primarily with the post-conflict economic activities of a country
 - C. the focal point within the UN system for all mine-related activities
 - D. focused on educating high-ranking government officials on the proper use of landmines
4. **As of the 2012 reports, how many countries are affected by landmines and ERW?**
 - A. Fewer than 30
 - B. 30-40
 - C. 40-50
 - D. More than 50
5. **Landmines and ERW are dangerous _____.**
 - A. during wartime
 - B. during peacetime
 - C. to children and adults
 - D. All of the above
6. **Who has the primary responsibility for taking action against the presence of landmines?**
 - A. The concerned state
 - B. The international community
 - C. Civilians living in affected regions
 - D. None of the above
7. **Landmines _____.**
 - A. keep communities safe after conflicts by providing geographical barriers to the outside world
 - B. remove vast areas of land and resources from productive use
 - C. indirectly assist in preparing agricultural fields for cultivation
 - D. create craters in the ground that are useful for holding water
8. **NGOs _____.**
 - A. often work in a mine-affected area prior to UN involvement in the area
 - B. are valuable sources of insight, advice, and operational capacity
 - C. are important partners in the development of mine action programmes
 - D. All of the above

Answer Key provided on the next page.

End-of-Lesson Quiz »

- 9. According to the document Mine Action and Effective Coordination, which of the following will support the role of the United Nations Secretary-General in relation to the Ottawa Convention in collaboration with UNMAS and other entities of the organization?**
- A. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
 - B. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)
 - C. The Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA)
 - D. None of the above
- 10. How does the mandate to provide food assistance keep the World Food Programme (WFP) involved in mine action?**
- A. Clearance of land required for the safe return of displaced populations
 - B. Clearance of access roads for the speedy and cost-effective delivery of food assistance
 - C. Clearance of crop land for agricultural use in order to promote sustainable levels of local food production
 - D. All of the above
- 11. According to the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013–2018, which of the following is not one of the strategic objectives?**
- A. Risks to individuals and the socio-economic impacts of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, are reduced
 - B. Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and ERW victims within broader responses to injury and disability
 - C. Transfer of mine action functions to national actors is slowed, with national capacity to fulfil mine action responsibilities discouraged
 - D. Mine action is promoted and integrated in multilateral instruments and frameworks as well as national plans and legislation

Answer Key »

- 1. B
- 2. A
- 3. C
- 4. D
- 5. D
- 6. A
- 7. B
- 8. D
- 9. C
- 10. D
- 11. C