



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

**Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
Lusaka, 11 September 2013**

**Statement on Clearance and Risk Reduction  
Delivered by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS  
on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA)**

Madam President,

I am delivering the following statement on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA) comprising the 12 United Nations Departments, Agencies, Funds, and Programmes involved in mine action.

Clearance of cluster munitions remnants can be accomplished and can be accomplished quickly.

This theme selected by Lao PDR and Ireland in 2011 continues to underline the United Nations position on clearance. In dozens of countries of countries, mine action programmes led, coordinated, supported, and implemented by the UN have built a critical body of experience, expertise, lessons learnt and good practices in survey, fencing, marking and demining activities.

The effective partnerships that the United Nations has forged with international and national operators and affected States have contributed to the improvement of technologies and standards to the benefit of the mine action community at-large.

With the expert assistance of the GICHD in elaborating the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and gathering data under IMSMA, the United Nations continues to fulfill its general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programmes.

The United Nations applies standards and quality data to the selection of operators, equipment, prioritization of tasks, and allocation of resources to ensure implementation is carried out on the basis of reliable data and in partnership with affected states.

Indeed, in sharing experiences and best practices, the United Nations is committed to value for money, to effectiveness and efficiency, and never at the cost of safety.

Most frequently, clearance operations are being complicated, slowed down by mixed contamination, including the presence of new and old contamination on the same territory. This painstaking exercise requires from affected States and those assisting them –

operators, international and national NGOs, the United Nations - extra funding from those in a position to do so.

The United Nations encourages donors to practice Good Humanitarian Donorship and commit to multi-year funding. In turn, the United Nations commits to transparency, accountability, and delivery of good quality services.

Madam President,

Article 4 is the cornerstone of the return of land, freedom of movement and resumption of economic activities. In South Sudan, 22,000 km have been cleared and/or assessed safe - equivalent to half the distance around the world. Today, trade has resumed and access to basic services has improved.

This contributes to a compelling case for countries such as South Sudan to accede to the Convention and fulfil their obligations once they join.

The United Nations supports the adoption of the voluntary template for a Declaration of Compliance with Article 4.

National standards, national strategic plans, guidelines, effective financial, and other support by the international community will, no doubt, enable proper implementation and compliance with Article 4.

Finally I would like to say a few words on risk education and risk reduction. Risk reduction education is the first thing to do - and sometimes the only activity possible - to help save lives of civilians, including boys, girls, women and men, and must be conducted in parallel to clearance operations.

Strategic Objective One of the UN Strategy for Mine Action 2013-2018 is evidence of the United Nations coordinated focus on reducing the risks to individuals and the socio-economic impact of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions. The percentage of affected individuals and communities with the information needed to reduce personal risks is one of the three main indicators for this objective.

The United Nations supports and provides mine and ERW risk education in dozens of countries and territories worldwide, including in many States Parties.

This gives the United Nations a primary voice to represent the interests and needs of affected countries and for contributing expertly and substantively to international debates on clearance and risk education

I thank you.