



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Second Preparatory Meeting

For the Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the APMB

Geneva, 10 April 2014

Messaging of the IACG-MA

Mr. President-designate,

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

The United Nations assigns great importance to the Maputo Review Conference as a key event in the process of achieving the common vision of a world free of antipersonnel mines. The outcome documents of the Third Review Conference, in particular the Maputo Action Plan, should provide guidance to the whole international mine action community for the next five years.

Though acknowledging each State Party to the Convention is responsible for its correct application, effective implementation involves many other actors, including in many cases the United Nations.

The negotiators of the Convention designated the Secretary-General of the United Nations as its Depositary. In addition to a number of administrative tasks and responsibilities assigned to the United Nations in the Convention, its Article 6 expressly refers to the role of the United Nations system in the provision of assistance for victim assistance, mine awareness, clearance and related activities

For these reasons we are present today to participate in the preparatory work for the Third Review Conference under the able presidency of Mozambique.

Views on the draft Maputo Action Plan

Mr. President-designate,

The United Nations appreciate that the Introduction to the draft Maputo Action Plan recognises the special partnership of States Parties with the UN, as well as with the ICRC and the ICBL. The United Nations is indeed proud of this partnership and is committed to reinforce and strengthen it.

This draft Action Plan is a good basis for further consultations that would certainly lead to an inspiring document for its adoption in Maputo in late June. The proposed commitments of States Parties as reflected in the different actions look strong, and sure to provoke interesting discussions.

May we suggest that when proposed actions refer to coordination, the role that the United Nations can play in supporting States Parties is explicitly mentioned. Currently the UN supports coordination of mine action programmes in over 30 States Parties to the Convention. This applies in particular to mine clearance, mine risk education, international cooperation and assistance, victim assistance and stockpile destruction.

In addition to assisting in the coordination and in the monitoring of mine action operations and activities, the UN also assists governments and affected communities in engaging relevant sectors to ensure the impact of mine action is measurable. This happens, in particular on early recovery and development settings aiming at targeting the most vulnerable population.

With regards to clearance, we appreciate the fact that the draft Maputo Action Plan calls for national standards, policies and procedures to be in line with the land release International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The United Nations looks forward to participating actively in the process leading to the finalization of the Maputo Action Plan.

Views on proposed post-Third Review Conference machinery and meetings

Mr. President-designate,

Your proposal for a meeting programme and related implementation machinery for the period 2014-2019 would bring possibly major innovations to the intersessional programme work since its creation in Maputo in 1999.

The United Nations is reviewing this document with particular interest. As it is quite extensive, we would limit ourselves at this time to some comments of a general nature.

The proposed machinery aims at improving the management of the work of the Convention, replaces the Standing Committees with, among others, the Committees for the implementation of Article 5 and for compliance, the appointment of a Special Envoy for victim assistance and of coordinators for cooperation and assistance. The United Nations looks forward to hearing the views of States Parties and other stakeholders on the proposed architecture and will continue to engage and support the processes to be endorsed.

With regard to the establishment of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, the IACG-MA welcomes this initiative that would encourage State Parties to meet their obligations, in particular those related to mapping and clearance, 'to the extent possible', of all mined locations.

The IACG-MA acknowledges that the Co-Chairs for Victim Assistance, Austria and Costa Rica, have put forward a proposal for the establishment of a Committee on Victim Assistance to complement the role of the Special Envoy. We think this proposal deserves positive consideration from the States Parties. The United Nations is ready to contribute to such a Committee in full application of the spirit of partnership, transparency and inclusiveness that characterizes this Convention and offers itself to be part of the Committee as a member.

Another question for discussion would be how other issues on the agenda of the prior implementation mechanism would be addressed between formal meetings of States Parties, such as those related to stockpile destruction, national implementation measures or transparency reporting.

We understand the new machinery should facilitate and promote the Maputo Action Plan and, therefore, it is very important to ensure full consistency between the two documents.

However as mentioned earlier, the United Nations is still in the process of reviewing them in detail.

Views on a political declaration to be adopted at the Third Review Conference

Regarding the draft Maputo Declaration, the United Nations fully agrees on the emphasis given to the completion of Article 5 obligations. However the IACG considers that a systematic identification and clearance of mined areas should also be accompanied by systems that put women, girls, boys and men at the heart of prioritization processes; in other words, to ensure that those most in need are targeted first as part of the strategy for a country to meet its implementation under the Convention.

A commitment for completion in 2025 seems in principle realistic, at least with regard to the current list of States Parties. Afghanistan, historically regarded as the most mine-affected countries, is, for example, committed to clear all its minefields and mined areas by 2023.

However, from the perspective of our role in the provision of assistance and cooperation in the framework of the Convention, we are very much aware that many of the heavily mine-affected countries are among the least developed countries in socio-economic terms, and their national resources for mine action should be complemented with sustained and predictable funding and technical support from the international assistance and cooperation.

Therefore in parallel to a commitment regarding time-bound obligations, as it is the case of Article 5, should there be explicit commitment by those “in a position to do so” to comply with Article 6?

Finally on this point, we would like to know if as with prior Review Conferences, High-level representatives from Observers to the Convention, such as those from the United Nations system would be invited to sign the political Declaration in Maputo.

Mr. President-designate,

The IACG-MA warmly thanks the Government of Mozambique for leading the efforts towards a successful Third Review Conference in Maputo and reiterates its firm commitment to assist you in achieving this very important goal.