

BACKGROUND NOTE

Plenary Session VI. Partnerships to Save Lives in Humanitarian Emergencies

Date and time: Friday, 14 February 2020, 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Chair: **Ambassador Nasir A. Andisha**, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN in Geneva

Speakers: **Ms. Christelle Loupforest**, Global Coordinator, Mine Action Area of Responsibility, UNMAS
Ms. Maria Agnese Giordano, Coordinator, Global Education Cluster, UNICEF
Mr. Olivier Cottray, Head, Information Management Division GICHD

Location: Room XVIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Introduction

In recent years, the humanitarian imperative of mine action has driven the sector closer to the heart of conflicts. There is now great pressure on the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and commercial operators to respond rapidly, aiding the safe movement of civilians, the provision of other forms of humanitarian assistance and the realization of durable solutions to displacement.

Over the past years, the mine action sector has made great strides in integrating mine action into humanitarian needs overviews and response plans in order to deliver the greatest benefit to the most vulnerable people in conflict settings. Yet navigating the complex humanitarian landscape remains a challenge. Recent experience suggests that the core pillars of mine action (risk education, land release, victim assistance and advocacy) can make major contributions during conflict but this experience has also forced the mine action sector to cooperate with a new set of actors – including civilians in crisis, conflict parties and the wider humanitarian community - and to grapple with difficult questions.

Purpose of the Session

The aim of the session is to explore these difficult questions and to make the case for effective partnerships. It seeks to raise awareness of the coordination platform called the Mine Action Area of Responsibility and build support for a strategic approach to coordination. We will hear the perspectives of various stakeholders who are working in collaboration with the mine action sector and discuss the tangible impact of coordination between affected States, the UN, donors, and NGOs, while exploring how to unleash the potential of joint analysis, planning, pooled resources, prioritization, excellency in implementation, joint learning, the scaling up of good practices and the promotion of durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons and refugees, in particular in the area of access to safe land.

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The panellists will highlight what mine action does or could do better to protect people and make commitments related to the theme of the plenary. From the challenges related to access and safe refugee return or ongoing efforts for an integrated response to health and protection needs in humanitarian crises, to the innovative visualization tools helping decision-makers to prioritise mine action resources, we will promote a 360-degree outlook on mine action coordination.

Format for the Plenary: (75 minutes)

Introductory remarks by Chair	10 minutes
Presentation by the Mine Action Area of Responsibility	10 minutes
Presentation by UNICEF	10 minutes
Presentation by GICHD	10 minutes
Discussion and Q & A	25 minutes
Closing remarks by the Chair	05 minutes

Food for Thought:

- How can mine action use its voice and expertise to reduce civilian harm?
- How can mine action navigate the complex humanitarian landscape, coordinating both within and beyond our sector?
- What could be done to improve coordination within the mine actor sector? And, with and among other humanitarian and development actors?
- Are mine action donors rewarding coordination?
- What commitments are needed for effective partnerships?
- How does the mine action sector hold itself accountable to affected people?