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Assistance in mine action

United Nations mine action: a strategy for 2001-2005*

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum 1

I. Introduction

1. Since the question of mine action was first taken up by the General Assembly in 1993, the international community has made significant progress towards creating an environment free from the threat of landmines:¹

(a) Most nations are in de facto compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (anti-personnel mine ban treaty),² and 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 (Convention on certain conventional weapons).³ This has resulted in a dramatic decline in the production, transfer, stockpiling and use of landmines;

(b) Public and political awareness of the landmine problem is widespread;

(c) Funding levels for mine action continue to be sustained, and even increased;

(d) In a growing number of countries, substantial progress has been made in reducing the impact of landmines through awareness education and the mapping, marking and clearance of mined areas.

2. The international mine action community has also recorded several important achievements in the area of institutional development, including the following:

* This strategy was endorsed on 26 September 2001 by the Inter-agency Coordination Group on Mine Action during a meeting chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.



(a) New standards and tools have been developed, including the International Mine Action Standards, the Information Management System for Mine Action, the Mine Action Investment Database, and the Stockpile Destruction Resource Site;

(b) The Meetings of States Parties to and the Standing Committees of the anti-personnel mine ban treaty, and of the Review Conferences and Preparatory Committees of the Convention on certain conventional weapons have continued to make significant progress;

(c) Mechanisms now exist to support coordination between donors and mine-action agencies; the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining has been established; and organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines continue to undertake new initiatives.

3. With these political and institutional developments in place, and with a growing understanding of the nature and scope of the mine problem taking root, the international mine action community is ready to move ahead from an approach that reacts to problems as they arise, to one in which mine action issues are addressed strategically at the national and global level.

4. The present document lays out a map for this transition, establishing a strategy⁴ for United Nations mine action covering the period 2001-2005. It outlines broad goals for mine action in general, and sets specific objectives for the United Nations system, working in partnership with Governments, international and non-governmental organizations, affected communities and concerned individuals, in response to the global landmine problem.

II. Vision

<p>We envision a world free of the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance, where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development, and where mine survivors are fully integrated into their societies.</p>
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III. Key principles

5. The principles outlined below reflect the agreed core values and policies upon which United Nations mine action is based:⁵

Nature of mine action

6. Mine action is, above all, about the interaction of people and communities with a mine-infested environment. The purpose of mine action is to recreate a safe environment conducive to normal life and development. Accordingly, mine action refers to all those activities geared towards addressing the problems faced by populations as a result of landmine or unexploded ordnance contamination. It encompasses five complementary core components: (a) mine awareness and risk reduction education; (b) mine clearance, including survey, mapping, and marking; (c) victim assistance; (d) destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel landmines; and (e) advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support a total ban on anti-

personnel landmines (A/53/496, annex II, para. 7). In countries where landmines present a threat to local populations or an obstacle to socio-economic development, mine clearance is a principal requirement, central to mine action efforts.

Humanitarian imperative

7. The United Nations policy vis-à-vis mine action and effective coordination articulates the strong humanitarian platform from which the United Nations approaches mine action. The policy states that landmines are first and foremost a humanitarian concern and must be addressed from this perspective. They are also an impediment to rehabilitation and sustainable (socio-economic) development. 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. 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. Humanitarian mine-action activities focused on reducing immediate threats to the well-being of affected communities and to the activities of humanitarian workers should not be subjected to conditionalities related to the continuing use of landmines (A/53/496, annex II, paras. 8 and 10-12).

Principle of national ownership and integration

8. According to the United Nations policy, “the primary responsibility for taking action against landmines lies with the concerned State” (ibid., para. 23). In countries where the scale of mine contamination is widespread and severe, and where international support is required, the United Nations stands ready to assist in the development of national/local mine-action programmes. In order to be effective, programmes in countries recovering from violent conflicts should be integrated into comprehensive strategies designed to support humanitarian action, peace-building, reconstruction and development.

Principle of cooperation and partnership

9. To ensure the most efficient response to the landmine threat, Governments, international organizations and civil society must cooperate closely with one another. The United Nations is committed to working in partnership with all like-minded organizations that endorse these principles, and to promoting effective coordination between all parties.

IV. Framework

10. The activities outlined in the present strategy document will be implemented within the context of a larger framework of treaties, resolutions and policies, which are described below.

International treaties and resolutions

11. This strategy is designed to be consistent with existing treaties, protocols and resolutions relevant to mine action, including, but not limited to, the anti-personnel mine ban treaty, the Convention on certain conventional weapons and its Protocols, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols of 1977, the Convention on

the Rights of the Child and the standard rules for the disabled.⁶ The strategy is intended to assist Member States to fulfil their international obligations and to support the universalization of relevant international instruments.

United Nations mine-action policy

12. This strategy also builds upon the United Nations policy on mine action (A/53/496, annex II), with which it is designed to be consistent. The strategy sets out concrete objectives for the period 2001-2005 for the United Nations system, working collectively under the coordination of the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat.

V. Mission Statement

Over the period 2001-2005, the United Nations will work in partnership with others to reduce the threat posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance, increase the understanding of the global mine problem, assist affected nations, and coordinate international mine-action efforts.

VI. Strategic goals and objectives

13. The strategy is built around six broad goals relevant to all core components of mine action. These goals, which are organized according to key themes, are intended to be complementary, rather than hierarchical. Together they form an integrated strategy. While the strategic goals suggest areas of priority for the international community as a whole, the objectives correspond to the specific contributions that the United Nations system intends to make, working in collaboration with its many partners to support the achievement of each goal. The United Nations intends to achieve all of the stated objectives by 2005, unless otherwise specified. For each objective, the relevant United Nations agencies will establish action plans, consisting of time lines, progress indicators and supporting outputs. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action will identify the agencies within the United Nations system responsible for the related activities (see A/53/496, annex II, para. 44).

Information

Strategic goal One. Information is produced and made available to all to understand and address mine-action problems.

- Objective 1.1 Inter-agency assessment missions completed and reports circulated for all affected countries requesting assistance within four months of formal request being received.
- Objective 1.2 A web-based mine information network developed by 2002, serving as a central gateway to all mine-related information, including reports provided under article 7 of the anti-personnel mine ban treaty, aggregated data coming from field programmes through the

Information Management System for Mine Action, and information on resources and technology.

- Objective 1.3 By mid-2002, data collected and made publicly available on the status of the national stockpiles of all States Parties to the anti-personnel mine ban treaty.
- Objective 1.4 The Information Management System for Mine Action, or equivalent compatible system, fully developed to meet the requirements of mine action programmes and deployed in all United Nations-supported programmes by 2003, with appropriate training provided to all users.
- Objective 1.5 Institutional roles defined, and information management tools established, to support mine-action technology development and dissemination of guidance to users by 2003.

Emergency response

Strategic goal Two. Rapid response capability is in place to meet mine action requirements in emergency situations.

- Objective 2.1 An emergency response plan based on collaborative arrangements among United Nations and other partners in place by the end of 2002, including arrangements for prompt mobilization of human, material and financial resources in support of the plan.
- Objective 2.2 Mine-action requirements integrated into existing early warning mechanisms, humanitarian response plans and peacekeeping contingency plans and procedures by the end of 2002.
- Objective 2.3 Guidelines developed and widely circulated by the end of 2002 regarding appropriate mine-action language to be included in ceasefire agreements, peace treaties and humanitarian access protocols.
- Objective 2.4 Protocols that are compatible with the Information Management System for Mine Action for the rapid gathering in emergency situations of mine-related information developed by the end of 2002, including provision for data on victims.
- Objective 2.5 Mine-action services effectively coordinated and implemented in United Nations-mandated operations.

Assistance to national and local authorities

Strategic goal Three. National and local capacities are in place to plan, coordinate and implement mine-action programmes.

- Objective 3.1 In United Nations-supported national programmes, mine-action strategies and plans developed and linked with overall national development and reconstruction plans.

- Objective 3.2 Transition and exit strategies developed for all United Nations-supported programmes by the end of 2002, or within one year of initiation for programmes established after that date.⁷
- Objective 3.3 International Mine Action Standards-compliant landmine impact surveys implemented in 15 of the most mine-affected countries by the end of 2004.
- Objective 3.4 Fifteen impact-based national plans completed, reflecting community participation, with nationally defined time lines.
- Objective 3.5 Management and operational training curricula targeted at personnel working in mine-action programmes developed by the end of 2002.
- Objective 3.6 A United Nations policy developed for supporting the professional retraining and employment of landmine survivors and other disabled people in mine-action organizations by the end of 2002.
- Objective 3.7 A plan for United Nations support to mine-action cooperation among mine-affected countries developed and initiated by 2003.
- Objective 3.8 Gender perspectives⁸ mainstreamed into all United Nations-supported mine-action programmes by 2003.
- Objective 3.9 All United Nations-supported victim assistance activities integrated into broader community and public health strategies by 2004.

Quality management

Strategic goal Four. Mine-action operations are implemented in a safe and cost-effective manner.

- Objective 4.1 Review, revision and drafting, where required, of additional International Mine Action Standards completed, including those relating to mine detection dogs and mechanical equipment.
- Objective 4.2 International standards for mine awareness/risk reduction education integrated into the International Mine Action Standards and disseminated by the end of 2002.
- Objective 4.3 Assistance provided to national Governments to enable them to adopt the International Mine Action Standards for all mine-action activities.
- Objective 4.4 At least one external evaluation conducted in all United Nations-supported programmes.
- Objective 4.5 Mechanism for the collection, dissemination and application of lessons learned and best practices developed for United Nations mine-action programmes by the end of 2002.
- Objective 4.6 Model language incorporating revised mine-action standards developed by the end of 2002 for use in contracts between donors, United Nations agencies and departments, and implementing partners.

- Objective 4.7 By end of 2002, United Nations technical assistance made available to national mine-action bodies to develop local mine-action legislation based on, or consisting of International Mine Action Standards.
- Objective 4.8 Initiatives to increase the availability of safe, appropriate and cost-effective techniques and technologies for mine detection and mine clearance continuously encouraged and supported.

Coordination and resource mobilization

Strategic goal Five. Adequate resources for mine action are mobilized and their use is effectively coordinated.

- Objective 5.1 Donor coordination mechanisms in countries receiving significant mine-action assistance supported or initiated by the United Nations.
- Objective 5.2 Meetings of the Steering Committee on Mine Action held twice a year, providing an effective mechanism to review operational activities and policy issues at the international level (A/53/496, annex II, para. 45).
- Objective 5.3 Global donor coordination mechanisms continuously supported.
- Objective 5.4 Requirements for assistance in mine action regularly included in existing humanitarian and developmental resource mobilization mechanisms, such as the consolidated appeal process and round tables.
- Objective 5.5 Full participation by donors in the Mine Action Investment Database achieved by 2003.
- Objective 5.6 Portfolio of mine-related projects, including United Nations and other projects, that reflect national mine-action priorities, made electronically available and frequently updated, beginning in 2002.
- Objective 5.7 A meeting of national programme directors and advisers held annually and effectively utilized as a forum for the exchanging of lessons learned and enhancing of international cooperation at the field level.
- Objective 5.8 Initiatives to strengthen mine-action coordination at the regional level, supported where appropriate.
- Objective 5.9 International technical material and financial assistance for mine action, in particular for the marking and clearance of minefields in affected countries, systematically promoted and facilitated.

Advocacy

Strategic goal Six. International instruments that address the mine/unexploded ordnance problem are universalized.

- Objective 6.1 All States regularly encouraged to ratify, accede to and comply with, existing international instruments on landmines.

- Objective 6.2 Efforts to further develop international law as it relates to landmines and explosive remnants of war supported.
- Objective 6.3 United Nations public advocacy strategy to support mine action, including the rights of victims, developed by the end of 2002.
- Objective 6.4 Increased involvement of senior leadership of the United Nations as advocates for mine action in United Nations, diplomatic, and public forums, and in affected countries and regions.

VII. Conclusion

14. The objectives identified above represent United Nations priorities for mine action for the period 2001-2005. They are ambitious, but they are also attainable. While the United Nations will remain prepared to respond to critical new needs and concerns that arise during the strategy period, the primary focus will be on achieving the strategic objectives in the present document. The impact of United Nations mine action will be significantly enhanced by this commitment to concentrate resources in those areas of intervention where the United Nations is most effective and most needed. Progress in achieving the goals and objectives in this strategy will be reported annually to the General Assembly in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine action. The strategy will be formally reviewed and evaluated in 2003, involving wide consultation with the United Nations partners.

Notes

¹ Throughout the document, the term “landmine” will be used in reference to both landmines and unexploded ordnance.

² Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction: 133 Signatories and 120 States parties, as of 26 September 2001.

³ Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (as amended on 3 May 1996) 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: 59 Parties, as of 26 September 2001.

⁴ This strategy has been developed in response to an identified need within the United Nations mine-action community for a defined vision for the future of the Organization’s response, and measurable outputs in support of this. This need was further highlighted in General Assembly resolution 55/120 of 6 December 2000, in which the Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to develop further a comprehensive mine-action strategy.

⁵ “Mine action and effective coordination: the United Nations policy”, submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, as part of his report on assistance in mine clearance (A/53/496, annex II, dated 14 October 1998). It was subsequently taken note of by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/26 of 17 November 1998.

⁶ Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex, of 20 December 1993).

⁷ In the context of the present document, the development of an exit strategy refers to the definition of clear objectives to be achieved in order for United Nations support to a national mine-action programme to be either terminated or very significantly reduced.

⁸ Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (Agreed conclusions 1997/2 of the 1997 coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/52/3/Rev.1)*, chap. IV.A).
