



**STATEMENT BY**  
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**ASSISTANCE TO MINE AFFECTED STATES PARTIES –**  
**CLEARING MINED AREAS**

Madame President,

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) welcomes the document “Draft Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention 2005-2009”, and the information it provides on the actions taken by States Parties to fulfil their Article 5 obligations, and also to achieve the respective action points in the Nairobi Action Plan. As noted in the Nairobi Action Plan, the GICHD is one of the actors who are in a position to provide assistance to States Parties. Therefore, I am pleased to provide a short update on the relevant aspects of our operational work in helping States Parties to achieve their obligations.

### Standards

Action #21 mentions support for the International Mine Action Standards, or IMAS. The IMAS were developed to improve safety and efficiency in mine action by providing guidance, establishing principles and, in some cases, by defining international requirements and specifications. They provide a frame of reference that encourages the sponsors and managers of mine action programmes and projects to achieve and demonstrate agreed levels of effectiveness and safety. The GICHD manages the development and updating of the IMAS on behalf of the UN. Over the past five years, the GICHD has also developed an outreach programme and training package to assist mine-affected countries develop their own national standards, in order that they meet in particular their obligations under Article 5 of the Treaty.

There are currently national standards from ten countries posted on the IMAS website.

## Information Management

Action #24 highlights making best use of management tools, such as the Information Management System for Mine Action, or IMSMA. The GICHD has produced IMSMA as a standard database for collecting, storing and analyzing mine action data. The system is now deployed to over 48 countries or programmes, and six training centres, and is regarded as the “standard” system by the United Nations. Stronger partnerships with UNMAS, UNDP and other relevant actors in relation to broader information management have been established in recent years. The GICHD provides free installation of the system, operator training and system development. The Centre has also revised and improved our method of field support, by making greater use of partner organizations, establishing a user forum and an on-line help desk that now handles many calls per week. Emphasis has been placed on ensuring that the IMSMA becomes fully operational in large programmes like Afghanistan and Cambodia.

## Technology

Actions 25 and 26 deal with the issue of improving mine clearance technologies. Over the past five years the GICHD, along with UNMAS, has hosted three technology workshops for field users. The workshops covered a wide range of practical topics, and provided an opportunity for operators to see firsthand a range of new equipment, like the new hand-held multi-sensors detectors being developed by Japan, the UK and US.. The GICHD is committed to assist with the practical sharing of technical information and equipment between States Parties. Since the Nairobi Summit, the GICHD has published a “Guidebook on Detection Technologies” as well as the biennial equipment catalogues on detectors, protective equipment and machines. The Centre has also assisted a number of countries to undertake equipment trials. In July 2010 the GICHD will take over the website of the International Test and Evaluation Programme (ITEP) at the end of its ten year mandate.

## Land Release

The draft Cartagena Review document highlights the value of States Parties making use of the full range of emerging practical methods to release more rapidly areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines. The GICHD has made the issue of land release a priority and is undertaking a wide range of work. A publication on non-technical survey methods was released in 2007, and a follow-on publication on technical survey is due out early next year. Three new international standards on land release were drafted by the GICHD, and these were approved earlier this year, and this has been followed by an extensive outreach programme. We believe that the application of sound land release principles will be the key to States Parties achieving their Article 5 obligations, as well as the relevant objectives in the Cartagena Action Plan. To deploy expensive mine clearance assets on land that is really mined only, has a significant cost saving effect.

## Linking Mine Action with Development.

Finally, the GICHD, along with donors and UNDP, have been active in the area of linking mine action to development pursuant to Action #47. The GICHD appointed a full time research officer in 2006 to assist in taking this issue forward. It has organized a series of national and regional workshops to promote the concept and to document successful innovations. An on-line LMAD practitioners network has expanded to include over 200 mine action and development practitioners. The GICHD has produced a series of guidelines for governments of mine-affected countries, national mine action officials, donors, UN and other international organizations, operators, and development organisations. We are convinced that in times of scarce resources it is paramount to set priorities in a deliberate way to achieve the best results for the money spent.

Madam President.

The GICHD notes with satisfaction the encouragement mentioned in the draft Cartagena Review document and Action 56 of the Nairobi Action Plan for the GICHD (and others) to continue to provide “invaluable support” to the work of the States Parties. We have done this with enthusiasm in the past, and we will continue to do so in the future with the same efficiency. We have reviewed the draft Cartagena Action Plan, and identified that the GICHD can play a role in assisting States Parties in over 30 of the listed action points.

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