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REPORT

GICHD ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

12 MARCH 2008

1. DATE AND VENUE

The GICHD Advisory Board Meeting was held at the GICHD between 15:00 and 17:30 hrs on Wednesday, 12 March 2008.

2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Advisory Board

Oto Jungwirth– Director, Croatian Mine Action Centre
Hansjoerg Eberle- Director General, FSD
Steinar Essen- Norwegian People's Aid
Gustavo Laurie- Geneva Liaison Officer ,UNMAS
Ben Lark- Head of Mine Action and ERW Sector, ICRC
Paula Claycomb: Senior Advisor, UNICEF
Heng Ratana, Deputy Director General, CMAC
Deemah Naser: Head of Planning Department, NCDR
Reuben McCarthy- Conflict Prevention & Recovery Specialist, UNDP

Excused:

Martin Borck- Executive Secretary, Chile National Demining Commission
Etsay Gebre Selassie – Director, Ethiopian Mine Action Office
Steve Wilson - Director for International Relations, MAG
David Hewitson – Director, European Landmine Solutions
Shohab Hakimi- Director, Mine Dog and Detection Centre-Afghanistan

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Ambassador Stephan Nellen – Director, GICHD/Chair of the Board
Ambassador Stephan Husy- Director Designate
Ian Mansfield – Deputy Director
Alan Arnold- Programme Manager Mine Action Information Systems
Aurora Chen- IMSMA Training Administrator
Ban Yaseen – Programme Officer

3. OPENING REMARKS AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Director GICHD opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the Advisory Board and thanked them for their presence. He explained the absence of some of the members and informed on their replacement by staff of the same organization. In particular, Mr. Reuben McCarthy of UNDP was representing Ms.Sara Sekkenes and Mr. Gustavo Laurie of UNMAS was representing John Flanagan. He introduced the new member Ms. Deemah Naser from the National Committee of Demining and Rehabilitation of Jordan.

Ambassador Husy (Director Designate GICHD) was also present as an observer, in order to get an overview of the meeting and to hear from the Board members in their support of the work of the Centre.
The Director then presented the agenda of the meeting, which was agreed by all members.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 30 OCTOBER 2007

The Director requested if there were any comments from the members on the draft minutes of the previous meeting, which had been previously circulated. As no comments were made, the minutes were adopted by the meeting.

5. UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

Amb. Nellen informed the meeting that the GICHD Advisory Board has been expanded to include 14 members, and more members may be added in the future. The reason for this expansion is to ensure that at least 8 to 10 members are in attendance for each meeting.

6. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF GICHD ACTIVITY REPORT 2007

Mr. Mansfield informed the participants that the Annual Activity Report 2007 was finalized and that the Centre will produce the narrative annual report within the next two months. He briefed the members on some of the main projects of the Centre included in the Activity Report, noting that analysis of “land release” methodology and practice globally was a major undertaking.

7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR MINE ACTION (IMSMA)

Mr. Alan Arnold gave a presentation about IMSMA, covering the following topics:

- Distribution policy
- Licensing policy
- Training policy
- Field support policy
- System overview
- System demonstration

The members discussed the IMSMA License agreement, which was circulated before the meeting. The following suggestions and comments were made by the members:

- In practice, the IMSMA software has been licensed to and used by the national mine action programme while other operators such as NGOs and commercial companies provide the system with most of the data. There should be a consensus that those operators have the right to use the system to access the data whenever they need it during their work in the country.
- The license agreement should be amended and should state that the national authority is encouraged to agree to the provision of the system to the other operators.
- The Centre should provide training to the other bodies in addition to the national staff, to ensure more understanding for IMSMA.

- The process of IMSMA development should be transparent and different mine action actors should be involved in this process to reflect the actual needs from the system.
- An IMSMA steering committee should be established to give guidance to the development of the system.

Mr. Arnold responded to the comments as follows:

- In the future, the Centre will continue to encourage the distribution of IMSMA on the widest possible basis to government and UN agencies and organizations, NGOs and other operators.
- The ongoing evolution of IMSMA includes inputs from UNMAS, UNDP, UNOPS, NGOs and other organizations.
- IMSMA training is provided to a variety of different actors including national authorities, UN, NGO and peacekeeping and peace building missions.
- The license agreement is open to revision and the Centre encourages the community to provide suggestions for inclusion in this process.
- An IMSMA users forum is and has been available to current users of the system on the GICHD website. This on-line forum was established in early 2000 and has been in continuous operation since that time.
- The Centre encourages the operations staff within the mine action organization to participate in IMSMA user training as they tend to be the direct users of the system.
- IMSMA technical information and training is provided to the local and/or international staff responsible for these tasks during the system installation process rather than as one aspect of the user training program.

Amb. Nellen concluded that the Centre welcomes the written advice and comments of the Board to draft a new license agreement. The objective is to finalize a revised text of the license agreement before the next Advisory Board meeting.

8. NEXT MEETING

Amb. Nellen informed that the next meeting will focus on the GICHD Action Plan 2009. The Centre will request the members' thoughts and ideas to develop this plan.

The next meeting was agreed to be held at the GICHD in the week 2-6 June, during the meetings of the Standing Committees of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

CONCLUSION

Amb. Nellen informed that the GICHD will confirm the date of the next meeting.
He thanked the members for their presence and comments.

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