



## SECOND AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE SEMINAR ON MINE ACTION AND EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR, DAKAR, SENEGAL, 2 - 4 NOVEMBER 2009

The second African Francophone seminar on mine action and explosive remnants of war (ERW) took place from 2 to 4 November 2009 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal.



The meeting was organised by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in collaboration with the CNAMS (Senegal National Mine Action Centre, based in Ziguinchor, Casamance) and with the financial support of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) and the French and Swiss Governments.

The three-day seminar brought together more than 50 people, including representatives from 15 Francophone African countries affected by mines/ERW and OIF member States or associated States. Officials from other Francophone countries (Belgium, Canada, France, Switzerland) also attended, as well as representatives from UN agencies (UNDP, UNMAS, UNICEF, UNIDIR), the European Commission, ICRC, ECCAC, ICBL, NGOs from Francophone and NGOs employing French-speaking staff.

Issues addressed during the meetings were defined in collaboration with national stakeholders based on recommendations stemming from the first seminar, which took place in Cotonou (Benin) from 20 to 22 October 2008. Discussions focussed on seven issues :

- global analysis of mine action and ERW information
- resource mobilisation
- mine risk education
- land release
- advocacy for relevant mine action and ERW international laws
- victim assistance
- synergy between mine action and small arms and light weapons issues

The seminar successfully contributed to strengthening the platform for information exchange among national stakeholders that was developed during the 2008 seminar, and to the exchange of knowledge and experiences concerning the issues selected by participants.

The seminar also underlined national expertise, particularly on issues such as land release, community-based action and mine risk education. The richness of exchange and the involvement of all participants in the debates show how useful this type of meeting is for Francophone mine/ERW-affected countries, and underline the necessity of such annual seminars.

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