

## Second Dialogue Linking Mine Action with Development 5-6- December, 2005 Geneva

### Executive Summary:

The second informal dialogue on Linking Mine Action with Development was held on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005 as part of a continuing effort, with interested donors, mine affected countries and international organizations, to follow up on key aspects of the Nairobi Plan of Action 2005-2009 which involve development cooperation.

This dialogue further defined ways and means to integrate mine action into development programming both as a complementary way of achieving the objectives of the Mine Ban Treaty and as a means to address the development constraints caused by explosives contamination, particularly in post-conflict states.

The main findings and proposed follow-up can be summarized as follows:

- The dialogue informed participants about key issues to consider in linking mine action to development;
- It led to the consensus that mine action should be part of a broader effort underway to better link post conflict security and development issues;
- Participants agreed that there is a need for increased information and cooperation between the mine action and development communities to make the link more effective;
- While mine affected countries are encouraged to include mine action as part of their development plans, donors must be prepared to assist these countries in this transition with the support of international organizations such as UNDP and the World Bank;
- Participants also discussed integrating mine action (including ERW) and security sector reform as a development issue within the peace and development nexus;
- Donors should seek guidance from OECD/DAC to maximize the impact of mine action projects by ensuring they make use of principles of aid effectiveness as appropriate;
- Meetings of States Parties and the Nairobi Plan of Action should remain the framework of reference for efforts at integration;
- A one page concept paper proposing continued work within the context of Mine Ban Treaty meetings will be developed for discussion and agreement.

## **I. Introduction:**

The Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World and its output, the Nairobi Plan of Action 2005-2009, have marked a turning point in the short history of the Mine Ban Convention, giving further impetus to an international treaty that has seen remarkable success to date. The sixth Meeting of States Parties, held in Zagreb November 28 to December 2, 2005, together with the two informal dialogues on mine action and development, were tangible steps forward in the achievement of outcomes sought by the Nairobi Plan of Action.

The first dialogue, held in June 2005, concluded that linking mine action to development was a valid approach to complement stand-alone projects and those funded under humanitarian programs. It recognized the need to enhance our capacity to construct the linkages between mine action and development and to provide development practitioners with sufficient information and the evidential basis for decisions to support mine action, based on national development plans and ownership. In addition, participants determined that advocacy and engagement at the broader multilateral level would increase the acceptance of the developmental character of mine action.

The second dialogue was launched with the aim of examining more closely the Nairobi Action Plan, bringing development agencies to the table to deepen our understanding of the link between mine action and development, and elucidating how the integration of mine action into development programmes will advance both developmental objectives and the goals of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The introductory statements of the hosts set the task for the dialogue: to suggest ways to integrate mine action into development which would enable donors to use development cooperation as a complement to dedicated funding in order to diversify the channels and tools available.

Among the issues to consider are :

- availability to development planners of accurate information on the socio-economic impact of landmines;
- links between mine action plans and national development plans;
- linkages between mine action and other development priorities such as governance, education, health, peace-building, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Above all, we have to remain mindful of the looming clearance deadlines, starting in 2009, imposed by the Ottawa Convention.

## **II. Perspectives on Mine Action:**

### **A. General Points**

The success of the Ottawa Convention has created challenges for the mine action community. More countries have signed the Convention (148 at latest count), fewer mines are being laid by fewer countries, production is down, trade in mines is down, and

the number of new victims is down. However, this success is overshadowed by the fact that there are still more than 80 mine-affected countries with clearance problems, most of which are signatories and most of which are developing countries. There are still 300,000 to 400,000 landmine survivors who will need assistance for the remainder of their days. Mine action is still primarily funded by a only small group of donors, often through the multilateral organizations. The peak of political interest in mine action was in 1997 and, although support remains steady, many other priorities are emerging.

The Nairobi Summit has led the Canadian International Development Agency and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to look at mine action as a cross cutting issue, involving humanitarian assistance, peace and security matters, and development cooperation, particularly in post conflict periods. In Zagreb, member states reinforced and reiterated the need to build these linkages. To achieve the Nairobi Plan of Action, development actors need to be engaged.

Mine action must move from supply-driven approaches, determined by donors and operators, to a demand-driven public service, managed by national governments through their poverty reduction strategy papers and national development plans, responding to the needs of local communities.

While there is a continuing requirement for dedicated funding for mine action, we are also witnessing a change in emphasis as more countries progress beyond their immediate post-conflict challenges into reconstruction and development. During these phases, the impact of mines on socio-economic development becomes more of a concern. Donors and mine affected countries need to further define and refine their tools to assess the impact of mines on development and provide different tools such as adapted survey techniques and cost benefit analysis.

Capacity development is key to building sustainable mine action programmes. Donors and mine affected countries should cooperate at increasing national ownership wherever national capacities for implementation and whole-of-government planning are being developed.

## **B. Mine Affected Countries:**

The presenters for Cambodia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Mozambique were in agreement that the national governments must be in charge of the process of establishing the agenda for mine action, including mapping, marking, clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance. In most of these countries, there is national legislation and the organization responsible for mine action is installed as part of national government machinery, with more or less active linkages to provinces or local governments/communities. Bosnia, Croatia, and Mozambique have made substantial contributions to domestic demining, by direct financing or through World Bank loans.

The messages from the mine-affected countries were that not all mine affected countries have the same problems and not all have developed clear action plans. (Judging from reports to the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties of the Ottawa Convention, approximately half

of mine-affected countries have provided the legal and/or institutional underpinnings for an indigenous national mine action organization.) National mine action plans, linked into the national development plans, are essential, along with annual workplans and with vertical and horizontal links between mine action and existing government structures at all levels, adapted to national culture. There has not been much explicit thought given to integration of mine action into development in some countries, and mine risk education and victim assistance are not always included, but discussions have started with donors. The national governments should lead the consultative process with stakeholders and create the climate for building domestic capacity. Regional cooperation is important in integrating mine action into development.

The major question to come out of this discussion is: given that the link between mine action and development was enshrined in the Nairobi Plan of Action, how do we make these connections between mine action authorities and other government ministries work, and ensure that mine action is recognized as a cross-cutting issue in development planning? There was broad agreement about the inter-relatedness of mine action and development and an expressed need to educate practitioners from each field about the other. The way forward will see: a continuation of informal discussions between the mine action and development communities; a proposal to the OECD/DAC to include mine action in their program of work in 2007/8 and the development of guidelines and tools for the development community to use in their programming; continued assistance to mine affected countries to ensure mine action is written into development plans and included in all relevant sectors.

### **C. Donor Countries:**

Participants representing donor countries gave brief explanations of how they respond to mine action. Although these approaches are different, as is the geographic emphasis of each donor, they are all directed to the same broad objective. Participants agreed, nevertheless, that they need to respond to requests from mine affected countries when these are viewed as part of plans and priorities for their development.

The majority of the bilateral donors still fund mine action as part of humanitarian assistance, although in many countries it borrows from development, post-conflict rehabilitation, peace-building or security, and is linked to disarmament issues such as small arms. Several speakers mentioned growing cooperation among their development agencies, UN development organizations, and NGOs even when mine action was funded from other government entities.

Notwithstanding their different approaches, participants agreed there was merit in linking mine action and development cooperation and that it was necessary to foster increased knowledge, information and communication between the mine action and development practitioners to ensure effectiveness.

The main message from the donors re-emphasizes the need for mine affected countries to take ownership of the entire spectrum of mine action programming, the inclusion of mine action in national development plans, especially when a country is moving from an 'emergency assistance' phase to a 'development' phase, and the inclusion of mine

action in regular consultations with donors (consultative group meetings, discussions on PRSPs and UNDAFs). They acknowledge the benefits of donor coordination in the field, both for reasons of effectiveness and for sharing information and strategies. Capacity development of the national bodies is seen as an essential element of cooperation assistance to ensure greater ownership and an effective national response. It can also be seen as part of an exit strategy for mine action assistance.

There is a strong perceived need for improved measurement of the results of mine action interventions. Closely linked to this is the need for tools to assess the socio-economic, as well as the strictly economic, impact of mines and explosive remnants of war on mine affected communities, leading to a better prioritization of mine action and the integration of mine action components into development programs.

A number of speakers supported the development of a more coherent approach by and among donors to addressing not only landmines and explosive remnants of war, but also small arms and security sector reform, as development concerns.

#### **D. International Institutions:**

The new UN Inter-Agency Policy on *Mine Action and Effective Coordination* sets a standard by providing a broad framework for the 13 UN organizations involved in mine action. The Policy addresses the issues mentioned by both the donors and the mine-affected countries, as well as additional concerns such as gender, training, partnerships, standards, and technology. The Policy states that not only should mine action be written into national development plans, it should be an integral component of national sector strategies, such as education and health. The UNDP and UNICEF are among UN development organizations that have already integrated components of mine action into their regular programming. There should be continued emphasis on good humanitarian donorship and multi-year donations. The Consolidated Appeals Process was seen as an effective means of getting project proposals together in a format accessible to all donors.

#### **E. Non-Governmental Organisations:**

The NGO community and operational demining companies were the first to see the need for convergence between mine action and development as a priority. They have been working with local development authorities and communities to ensure proper benefits occur from demining. They have expressed concern that mine affected countries respond more rapidly to donor requirements than to NGO requests. Thus their need for clarity and consensus on issues of community involvement and bottom-up planning has not always been answered. Instances when demined areas were not used by the local communities highlighted the need for a means for assessing the comparative socio-economic impact of possible demining tasks to ensure value for expenditures on mine action and the sustainability of future resources. The NGOs around the table were in agreement with the need for linking mine action with development programming. For some time, the question for them has been how to effect this.

### **III. The Broader Stage:**

There was general agreement that, in order for increased integration of mine action into development programming, it is essential to broaden the discussion beyond the mine action community. The Nairobi Action Plan has endorsed the importance of development programming for the mine action community, but it remains for the development practitioners to implement this. Until recently, the two communities have had only sporadic interaction.

The Canadian initiative to put mine action on the OECD/DAC program of work for 2007/8 is a major effort to broaden the debate. This is the principal forum for the development community to formulate policy guidance for its members, and has continually been updated with policies and populated by networks working on emerging issues. Support from the development community in the DAC will be essential if the initiative is to succeed. The goal is to broker a 'relationship' between the mine action and development communities.

### **IV. General Discussion:**

It was generally felt that a formal mechanism should not be created to track the points made here and as a result of the Nairobi Action Plan. Whatever existing mechanism was chosen should not be constrained by the Mine Ban Treaty so membership could include development practitioners, non-signatories of the Treaty and could consider issues such as ERW as well as landmines. Suggestions were made that it might be a small working group; it might be one of the contact groups under the standing committee of the Convention; it might be the Mine Action Support Group, which currently is being reinvigorated.

### **V. Conclusions:**

There has been real change from the meeting of the first informal dialogue to this meeting. Consensus has been reached about the links between mine action and development programming. We have exchanged considerable information about how we should address the issues of integration and what further is needed to implement the integration. There would be positive gain from continuing these discussions but the format and forum remain to be determined. The co-chairs suggested that the next dialogues might best be informal, inclusive and as flexible as possible.

The participants have agreed on the following steps:

1. The need to set up an informal group with links to both the development world and the world of the Mine Ban Treaty
2. The need for a concept note proposing the tasks and scope of such future dialogues
3. The importance of supporting the initiative presented to the OECD/DAC in the integration of mine action into development programming.
4. The need to report back to the Meeting of States Parties.