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THE STRATEGY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON MINE ACTION 2013-2018





In observance of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opens a photo exhibition at UNHQ. (UN Photo/Ryan Brown)

“

I have seen the devastation caused by these indiscriminate weapons, which hamper reconstruction, damage the environment and cause grievous injuries and death for decades after conflicts end. My fervent hope is that the world will one day be free from the threats caused by landmines and explosive remnants of war.

”

Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary-General

UNITED NATIONS INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP ON MINE ACTION

Chair: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/ UNMAS

UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA)

UN Development Programme (UNDP)

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Bank*

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)*

*Observer status

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VISION

The vision of the United Nations is a world free of the threat of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munitions, where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development and where the human rights and the needs of mine and ERW victims are met and survivors are fully integrated as equal members of their societies.

MISSION STATEMENT

The United Nations works with affected states to reduce the threat and impact of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, on peace and security, humanitarian relief, human rights, and socio-economic development; It does so in partnership with civil society, the private sector, international and regional arrangements, and donors with an aim to secure levels of prevention and protection for individuals and communities, at which point UN mine action assistance is no longer requested.

DPKO-UNMAS working with the national Ivoirian authorities gathered and destroyed these anti-personnel mines in Toumodi, Côte d'Ivoire in 2012. (UN Photo/Basile Zoma)



I. INTRODUCTION

Affected states, with the support of the international community, have achieved real progress in addressing the threat of mines and ERWs, including cluster munitions. This has been reflected most notably by the drastic reduction in casualties over the last two decades, as well as by increased national capacity, advances in the universalization of various treaties and conventions and enhanced cooperation amongst mine action actors.

Significant challenges remain but these achievements constitute major opportunities to accelerate the realization of a world free of these threats.

The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018 (“the strategy”) presents the common objectives and commitments that will guide the work of the United Nations in mine action¹ over the next six years in support of this momentum.

As such, the strategy provides analytical and programmatic guidance for the formulation, implementation and revision of United Nations assistance at the country level, in a manner that is consistent with the specific needs, requests and legal regimes of each context.

Throughout, the strategy reaffirms the importance of effective partnerships and emphasizes the imperative for the United Nations to collectively increase the impact of its mine action work across the range of peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development responses.

In addition to regular monitoring and reporting, this strategy will be subject to a mid-term review, to assess progress made and explore the need for any changes in light of, inter alia, the new global framework that may be developed in conjunction with the 2015 Millennium Development Goals World Summit.

¹ Led by members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA).

Unexploded Ordnance Destroyed by UN Demining Battalion in Hiniyah, Lebanon. (UN Photo/Mark Garten)



II. THE CONTEXT FOR ENGAGEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN MINE ACTION

This strategy will be implemented taking into account the following:

1. Significant progress has been made. Effective responses have contributed to a substantial reduction in mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, casualties and in the production, use and sales of mines and associated weapons.

Since the entry into force in 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC), the international legal framework for mine action has been bolstered and expanded, notably through the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW Amended Protocol II) in 1998, the Protocol V (ERW) of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) in 2006, and the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008, and of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in 2010.

National capacity to manage the short-term impacts as well as long-term residual threats has also improved, even if international assistance continues to be requested by a number of affected states.

2. The momentum must be sustained to realize the global vision of a world free of the threat of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions. In particular, efforts to achieve universalization and full implementation of all relevant treaties and conventions and ensure consistent reporting on obligations must continue.

Additional investments must be devoted to fully meet the rights and needs of mine and ERW victims, as reflected in respective legal and political commitments². These investments must include the development of adequate of health and social systems, the integration of responses into “national disability, development and human rights frameworks and mechanisms”³, and the provision of socio-economic opportunities for survivors.

² Including the 2010-2014 Cartagena Action Plan and the Vientiane Action Plan.

³ Article V, Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Further efforts must also be dedicated to strengthening and mainstreaming gender perspectives in mine action planning, implementation and evaluation.

3. Challenges and risks remain. Recent armed conflicts have again exposed populations and lands to threats from mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, as well as to immediate threats of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and of explosive weapons in populated areas. In addition to the significant human and humanitarian costs and impact, these risks further hinder prospects for socio-economic recovery.

4. Responses must remain comprehensive and always focused on people. The variety of threats and impacts highlight the need for greater protection of individuals and communities, including for refugees, displaced persons and returnee populations, from the immediate crisis phase onward. Throughout, the safety of mine action staff, including emergency healthcare providers, and assets must also continue to be a priority.

5. Mine action work is evolving. Mine action actors – UN and partners alike – are increasingly requested to respond to the security and humanitarian hazards posed by various explosive devices by providing assistance, such as weapons and ammunition stockpile security, management and destruction, IED risk and awareness training, and armed violence reduction.

6. Effective responses that meet the needs of people require cost effective programming and results-based evidence. In support of such requirements, data collection and monitoring and evaluation systems are improving, but require consolidation and increased focus on impact.

7. Mine action remains an essential component of the work of the United Nations. The United Nations needs to maintain a clear focus on addressing the impacts of mines and ERW and to further integrate all dimensions of mine action into international assistance frameworks, including the relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and country level post conflict and development plans.

Mine action is relevant across the areas of peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development. In each, the need for immediate post conflict and emergency responses remains as critical as longer-term capacity building support.

III. THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN MINE ACTION

The United Nations role in mine action is rooted in the UN Charter and further defined in UN resolutions, which consider “mine action to be an important component of United Nations humanitarian and development activities”⁴.

Specific mandate and responsibilities have been given by Member States to a number of UN entities to address the various challenges presented by mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, across a range of contexts from immediate post crisis and emergency responses to long-term capacity development.

Furthermore, UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions have recognized the relevance of mine action across peace and security, humanitarian, human rights, and development pillars. They include those adopted on the protection of civilians, on the protection of children in armed conflict, on women, peace and security, and on the relationship between disarmament and development.

These resolutions consistently refer to the significant role of the UN whilst reaffirming that States have primary responsibility in mine action. In each affected state, UN assistance will therefore shift over time, as well as in nature and intensity, according to needs and requests for assistance, and the comparative advantage of other actors.

⁴ GA Resolutions A/RES/53/26 (1998), A/RES/54/191 (1999), A/RES/55/120 (2000), A/RES/56/219 (2001), A/RES/57/159 (2002), A/RES/58/127 (2003), A/RES/60/97 (2005), A/RES/62/99 (2007), A/RES/64/84 (2009), and A/RES/66/69 (2011).



A member of a performing troupe doing mine risk education in Cambodia holds a poster showing different signs that warn of the presence of landmines, at Boeng Prolith Primary School near the western town of Pailin. (© UNICEF/NYHQ2004-0763/Dan Thomas)

IV. UNITED NATIONS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

For the period 2013-2018, the UN is committed to focus its resources on the following strategic objectives⁵.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Risks to individuals and the socio-economic impacts of mines and ERW, including cluster munitions, are reduced.

Indicators:

- % of previously affected land cleared and being used for socio-economic purposes
- % Increase in safe access to basic services, facilities, and vital infrastructure
- % of affected individuals and communities with the information needed to reduce personal risks.

UN specific activities include:

- Facilitate and provide prioritized marking, fencing, technical and non-technical survey, and clearance
- Support and provide mine-ERW risk education
- Coordinate and support immediate emergency responses
- Support ammunition stockpile security, management and destruction
- Support affected states in collecting mine action data, disaggregated by age and gender, and support national information management systems
- Promote gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes

⁵ To this end, baselines and targets will be developed under the strategy's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and ERW victims within broader responses to injury and disability.

Indicators:

- % of affected states that have adopted and implemented a disability policy and plan of action that incorporate all aspects of victims assistance.
- % of affected states provide age and gender sensitive services to ensure psychosocial support, social inclusion, economic reintegration, care and protection for victims⁶
- % Increase in external support to and national budgetary allocations from affected states for the provision of services to mine and ERW, including cluster munitions victims within a broader framework of disability
- % Of affected states that collect, analyze and disseminate data related to mine and ERW related disabilities disaggregated by age and gender

UN specific activities include:

- Advocate for the adoption, adherence to and implementation of laws and public policies that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities including survivors.
- Provide guidance and technical assistance on evidence-based and cost-effective means to improve access to victim's assistance services.
- Mobilize and channel resources for programmes, services and initiatives in support of mine and ERW, including cluster munitions, victims as persons with disabilities
- Support the collection and use of age and gender disaggregated victim data into injury surveillance and information management systems
- Facilitate and assist in the provision of gender and age sensitive psychosocial support, social inclusion, economic reintegration, and care and protection services to victims

⁶ This includes, but is not limited to, relevant information management systems, emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support and social inclusion; economic reintegration, and laws and public policies that promote the rights of all persons with disabilities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

The transfer of mine action functions to national actors is accelerated, with national capacity to fulfill mine action responsibilities increased.

Indicators:

- % of affected states in which national authorities coordinate mine action activities and directly implement and manage mine action responses
- % of resources for mine action designated under national budget or managed by national authorities
- % of affected states with surveillance and information management systems managed by national authorities
- % of affected states with national strategies and completion plans that articulate milestones.

UN specific activities include:

- Support affected states in developing and implementing national strategies and completion plans with milestones for transition in accordance with their needs and international legal obligations
- Provide technical advice, institutional support, capacity assessments and capacity building to national authorities on mine action activities upon request
- Facilitate the transition from immediate post conflict programming to rights-based prevention, recovery, and protection approaches led by national authorities
- Support the development of national information management and data collection systems, with data disaggregated by age and gender.
- Advocate for inclusion of mine action in national budgets and facilitate the mobilization of resources

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Mine action is promoted and integrated in multilateral instruments and frameworks as well as national plans and legislation

Indicators:

- % of States Parties to mine action treaties and conventions, including the APMBT, the CCM, the CCW (Amended Protocol II and Protocol V), and the CRPD
- % of states who report completely on all mine action related treaties and conventions including the APMBT, the CCM, the CCW (Amended Protocol II and Protocol V) and the CRPD
- % of relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on peace and security, human rights, gender, development, and humanitarian referencing mine action
- % of ceasefire and peace agreements including or reflecting mine action provisions
- % of national development plans, strategies and frameworks that include mine action

UN specific activities include:

- Advocate for the universalization and implementation of mine action conventions, including the APMBT, CCM, CCW and its Protocols, and CRPD
- Promote and support the inclusion of mine action in relevant international policy frameworks and multilateral fora, as well as relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and in peace process/ceasefire negotiations
- Provide policy makers, at national and international levels, with data and context specific analysis on mine action trends and emerging challenges
- Mobilize resources for mine action programmes and activities

CROSS CUTTING FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

To fulfill these strategic objectives the UN will carry out cross cutting functions, bearing in mind the following purposes and approaches:

- 1. Coordination**, to improve the coherence, effectiveness and impact of collective responses delivered in support of national authorities and to facilitate effective engagement by international actors.⁷
- 2. Capacity development**, to support affected states in fulfilling their responsibilities and reinforce national ownership, based on demand driven approaches, and by *identifying, mobilizing and providing specific expertise*, including through the use of south-south cooperation opportunities.
- 3. Data collection and analysis**, to support national and international decision-making and the efficient and effective allocation of resources, and with a priority on supporting national data and surveillance systems where possible.
- 4. Advocacy** for global and national mine action goals, including for treaty universalization and implementation, compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL), victim's assistance and its integration into disability frameworks, and the provision of adequate and reliable funding support.

⁷ In-county coordination mechanisms will continue to be supported by global ones such as the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, the Global Protection Cluster and the Inter-Agency Support Group to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, amongst others.

Deputy Chairperson of the National Mine Action Authority Major Gen Nyang Chol Dhuor adds his signature to support a mine-free South Sudan at an event organized by UNMISS and the Government of South Sudan in Juba. (UNMAS South Sudan photo/Sasha Logie)



V. UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP IN MINE ACTION

UN mine action work supports multilateral frameworks⁸ of assistance, and Human Rights based approaches. As such, the UN will implement its strategy in accordance with the following principles of partnership:

- **Clarity** and efficiency through effective and transparent coordination, and open dialogue on needs and requirements of affected states, and UN comparative advantages
- **Sharing of experiences, good practices, and lessons learned** from affected states that have similar experiences
- **Mutual accountability** for commitments and contractual obligations.
- **Transparency**, in resources applied and results achieved, through a strengthened monitoring and evaluation system and recognition of the role and achievements of partners.

Monitoring adherence to these principles is an integral part of the strategy. To this end, the UN will make full use of existing coordination structures to solicit feedback.

⁸ Including the Millennium Development Goals, the New Deal, the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, and the Responsibility to Protect.

At the ICRC Hospital for war victims in Kabul, a man accompanies his son who is learning to walk after having a leg amputated following a landmine accident. UNICEF supports prosthesis and orthopaedic services for children and women at this hospital. (© UNICEF/NYHQ1992-0327/John Isaac)



VI. STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS CAPACITY IN MINE ACTION

The UN commits to the following initiatives to strengthen its assistance in mine action.

1. Plan for the transfer of mine action functions to national actors, in consultation with affected states and partners, on the basis of context specific parameters, and in recognition of other partners' contributions.

2. Strengthen the UN division of labor, by making full use of existing mine action coordination mechanisms⁹ at country level, on the basis of comparative advantages, and under the authority of senior UN leadership.

3. Sustain the implementation and monitoring of the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, with particular attention on the collection of mine action data disaggregated by gender and age, and adherence to gender requirements in UN contracting procedures and fund allocation.

4. Update the UN Policy on Victim Assistance, taking into account the new and stronger normative environment for victim assistance and persons with disability and focusing on the integration of victim assistance into broader disability programs and frameworks at the country and global levels.

5. Continue to promote compliance with and the use of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), and supporting regular reviews of such standards to reflect technological changes and emerging situations.

6. Upgrade the substantive and technical skills of UN staff, by developing in particular a cost-effective general induction training for all UN Mine Action staff, building on, and complementing existing UN skill development modules, and focusing, inter alia, on the mainstreaming of mine action in broader responses, best practices in project management and administration, staff security considerations, the use of technology and other deployment requirements.

7. Further strengthen resource management, with a focus on the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of all UN mechanisms established to mobilize and disburse funds for mine action interventions.

⁹ See note on page 17.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The UN considers that identifying the impact of its mine action work is essential to facilitate evidence-based policymaking and results-based management.¹⁰ As such, the UN is committed to establishing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism¹¹ to assess progress made by the UN in the implementation of its vision, strategic objectives and internal initiatives.

The United Nations monitoring and evaluation mechanism will require dedicated resources for its design, operation and maintenance; its operation will also require a commitment to providing country-offices with the funding and support requisite to collect and upload data on a core set of indicators in a timely manner.

Reporting on implementation of the strategic objectives by the United Nations will be done through the biennial reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on Assistance in Mine Action.

¹⁰ Data collection has also emerged as a key element in convention monitoring (e.g. Article 31 of the CRPD).

¹¹ Details provided in the UN Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

VIII. ENABLING FACTORS

The success to be achieved by the United Nations in implementing this strategy also requires the following contributions from its partners:

1. Continued engagement and ownership *by affected states* in determining needs and the type of support required; in integrating mine action, including victim assistance, into national planning and budget processes; in complying with the international mine action normative frameworks and in upholding the principles of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law.

2. Enhanced political support from member states and regional organizations, including by mainstreaming mine action priorities into policies, resolutions, decisions, national plans and other relevant policy frameworks.

3. Sustained and predictable financial support from donors and in national budgets. Such support is necessary for emergency responses as well as for interventions designed to transfer responsibilities to sustainable national systems and institutions. External resources will also be critical to the effective and efficient implementation of this strategy's commitments to increase UN capacity and strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems

4. Increased buy-in from internal UN and external actors to engage with mine action on related interventions (disabilities related health and psychosocial support, protection and promotion of human rights, livelihoods and economic reintegration, education, weapons and ammunition stockpile security and management, community violence) in order to develop comprehensive responses.

5. Regular and substantive participation on the part of NGOs and commercial operators in joint operational responses and/or collective advocacy efforts.

Taufa Ibrahim and Mariam Zaid, two female battle area clearance operators using a large loop detector in Mehaires, Western Sahara. The UN funded mine action programme in this region is aimed at protecting the local population and UN peacekeepers. (UN Photo /Martine Perret)



IX. CONCLUSION

The vision driving this strategy highlights the multi-dimensional nature of mine action. The UN continuous engagement in all aspects of mine action is essential for facilitating immediate humanitarian efforts, improving peace and security, promoting stabilization, ensuring respect for human rights, and enabling development goals.

The integration of mine action into broader frameworks of international assistance and cooperation is therefore necessary to accelerate progress on mine action specific objectives, as well as to ensure sustainable gains across the spectrum of humanitarian, human rights, peace and security and development responses.

The strategy also represents the UN's dedication to continued coherence and effectiveness, through a set of common objectives and by articulating commitments to strengthen its own capacity. The overall direction and principles provided in this strategy shall serve to inform the UN engagement at headquarters and country level, most notably in devising responses tailored to specific circumstances and requirements of an affected country.

Finally, the substantive engagement of partners is as essential for the strategy's implementation as it has been in its design. The UN looks forward to continuing its collaboration with affected states, donors, NGOs and commercial operators and achieving progress towards its vision and the strategy.

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The United Nations strategy has been developed through extensive consultations, both within the UN and with affected states, donors, NGOs and implementing operators with the aim of ensuring a transparent and comprehensive approach. This process included three internal retreats of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action following the launch of a series of bilateral discussions and feedback through an online questionnaire. A stakeholder consultation session was held in September 2012. Drafts of the strategy were shared with each of these constituents prior to finalization. Under the chairmanship of Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous, DPKO, the Principals of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action endorsed this strategy on 18 December 2012.

ACRONYMS

APMBC Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (or Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction)

CCM Convention on Cluster Munitions

CCW Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

CRPD Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

ERW Explosive Remnant of War

HRL Human Rights Law

IACG-MA Inter-Agency Coordination Group – Mine Action

IATG International Ammunition Technical Guidelines

IED Improvised Explosive Device

IHL International Humanitarian Law

IMAS International Mine Action Standards

MA Mine Action

MDG Millennium Development Goal

NGO Non Governmental Organization

UN United Nations

“ The world is over-armed.
Peace is under-funded. ”

Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary-General

Explosive remnants of war gathered for destruction Libya.
(UNSMIL/UNMAS Photo)



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