

# Intersessional Meetings of the States Parties

30 June - 02 July 2020, Geneva



## Bosnia and Herzegovina Statement

Mr President, Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express our deep gratitude to all stakeholders who have provided support to Bosnia and Herzegovina over all these years of our struggle with mines. Current size of mine suspected area is 967 km<sup>2</sup> (966.686.086 m<sup>2</sup>), which is approximately 1.9% of the total country size.

During the last extension request from 2 July 2018 to 14 May 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre, Armed Forces of BiH and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) conducted a project entitled **“Country assessment of suspected hazardous areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina”**. The project aimed to:

1. Reassess suspected hazardous areas in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) applying land release methodology developed for the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
2. Define the indicators for implementation of the new Mine Action Strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and develop midterm action plan for land release.

The final result of this project included the creation of 488 mine suspected areas (+10 MSAs in progress) for further operations and led to the cancelation of approximately 966.686.056 square meters. MSAs are not to be confused with Suspected Hazardous Areas, MSA are geographical areas, some of which contain SHAs and CHAs, that will be tasked to operators and subjected to land release.

The assessment carried out identified a total of 1.413 mine affected communities and estimated that 121.000 residents are directly affected, which is 3,3% out of total number of Bosnia and Herzegovina residents.

Today the remaining challenges are to complete all chapters of the national standards in accordance with IMAS, to finalise drafting of new Rulebook on accreditation, to introduce a new web-oriented information system and provide support of all donors for implementation of land release concept.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025 adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2019 embraces Land Release and has five strategic goals including:

- strengthen information quality management procedures,
- transparency and communication at a national and international level in order to increase its visibility,
- continue gaining clarity on the exact location of suspected and confirmed mined areas,

- carry out mine awareness measures that are gender sensitive and respect diversity in order to reduce the number of mine/ERW accidents and to support safe and sustainable activities necessary for life and
- ensure the participation of all mine/ERW victims in society on equal grounds with others, their needs are identified and fulfilled and their existential opportunities promoted through rights-based assistance which recognizes diversity.

The BHMACH with support of the UNDP and financing from the European Union created the new web orientated database to replace the existing system and increase accessibility and transparency of mine action data. **The Mine Action Governance and Management (MAGMA) Project** aimed to assist the mine action authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in increasing transparency, improve planning capabilities and implement contemporary mine action standards for an accelerated pace of mine clearance. It builds on the activities implemented in the past that resulted in reconvening the Board of Donors, improvements in human resource management processes and mine action standardization within BHMACH.

In accordance with the Oslo Action Plan, **Mine Risk Education** in the period 2020-2027 will be implemented through public information, education of affected population groups and through linking mine action with affected communities. The focus of Mine/ERW Risk Education is the conduct of activities aimed at the most affected population, as per the data from the general assessment of mines/ERW.

In accordance with the Law on Demining in Bosnia and Herzegovina, funds for implementation of mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be ensured via international cooperation, through the budget of national institutions, entity budgets and other sources.

Based on a more precise understanding of the remaining challenge gained during the last extension request and in accordance with Article 5 of Ottawa Convention, Bosnia and Herzegovina requests a six (6) years extension from **01 March 2021 to 01 March 2027**.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has sufficient organizations and capacity to fulfil its obligations under the Convention including a number of governmental, non-governmental and commercial companies. In order to fulfil the obligations under Article 5 of the Convention within this timeframe (six years) from 1 March 2021 to 1 March 2027, the programme will request approximately **336 million BAM (168 million euros)**. The finance plan according to the Operational plan for 2020-2027 is prepared in accordance with the realistic financial frame of mine action.

Thankfully, we continue seeing a trend of decreasing the number of mine victims compared to previous years with no mine casualties recorded in Bosnia and Herzegovina since November 2019.

Thank you.