

MASG

9 October 2015

Thank you for convening this meeting and for giving me the floor. Let me briefly highlight 4 points:

1) Ukraine project in partnership with DCAF and OSCE

- As some of you might know, the GICHD is now located within the Maison de la Paix in GVA, a building complex closed to the UN HQs and hosting a number of organizations working in the field of peace and security. The proximity to those organizations helps us design and implement joint initiatives which – first experiences show – benefit from a greater convening power and from the possibility to offer more comprehensive support packages.
- A concrete example: the GICHD is currently working in the Ukraine together with the OSCE and DCAF – the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, the latter also based within the MdP. The GICHD provides support to the Ukraine in its efforts to develop further its mine action legislation and architecture. Being associated with DCAF, who is specialized in SSR support and has been working in the Ukraine for many years, contributes to making our efforts on mine action part of broader efforts to improve good governance in the Ukrainian security sector – thereby enhancing their relevance and sustainability.
- Two workshops will be held next week in Kiev. First, a seminar on mine action for members of Parliament and civil society organizations. Second, a workshop supporting the development of a law on mine action in which the UN sub-cluster on MA in Ukraine will also take part.

2) The Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Outreach (EECCA) Programme

- The GICHD runs and supports language outreach programmes in French, Arabic, Farsi and Russian. The objective of these programmes is twofold: to make knowledge and know-how available in local working languages, and to promote regional cooperation – both with a view to enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of MA programmes. I would also argue that the exchange of expertise among programmes of the same region ultimately decreases the need for international support.
- The Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asia Outreach Programme, run in Russian language, was kicked off last June in Minsk. Some 15 countries participated in the event. The discussions were technical, and political considerations were left aside.
- In that frame, the GICHD is currently translating the International Mine Action Standards and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines into Russian. The Russian Programme will continue to meet in 2016 and a study trip to Azerbaijan, combined with a technical workshop on norms, standards and legislation, will be arranged. The second EECCA annual conference is set to take place next year.

3) PriSMA project: Priority Setting Tool

- As reflected in its strategy, the GICHD is convinced of the key importance of embedding MA into the broader frame of human security – understood as freedom from fear and from want. Making mine action more attuned to national security and development priorities makes it both more relevant and sustainable.
- Times of tighter budgets make it even more imperative to be guided in our work by the overall impact of MA operations on lives and livelihoods rather than by the sheer number of mines cleared.
- The GICHD is developing a tool, named PriSMA, which will allow national authorities and other actors to do exactly that: the tool – through its GIS components – clarifies the degree of proximity between hazards and vulnerable communities, between hazards and assets such as schools, hospitals and infrastructure. The tool then produces a map showing the location of hazards that impact communities the most, allowing national authorities and MA operators to dispatch clearance resources accordingly.
- The project is currently being piloted in partnership with the Sri Lanka National Mine Action Centre as well as with Colombia's Directorate for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines (DAICMA). You will hear more on that in the near future.

4) AVM

- The GICHD is currently contributing to various policy debates on matters of human security. Our role as we see it is to help facilitate more informed discussions through the provision of evidence.
- In November last here, we presented a study, together with SIPRI, on the humanitarian and developmental impact of AVM. This was done in GVA, in the frame of the CCW. The study is now being followed up in two ways:
- First, the GICHD has recently launched a web-based interactive map on AVM accidents based on media review and accident data received from mine action programmes. For the first 6 months of 2015, the map shows unfortunately a high number of casualties (197 killed and 109 injured). The map will be updated regularly, and I want to thank our UN colleagues for their precious support in that regard. In 2016 a statistical analysis of AVM accident data will be published.
- Second, in cooperation with humanitarian aid organizations such as the WFP, SIPRI, academia and mine action operators, further research will be carried out on the humanitarian impact of AVM contamination on aid delivery and resettlement.
- Let me take this opportunity to recall that UNODA, UNMAS and the GICHD will co-organize an informal and open-ended meeting on AVM on 6 November in GVA, aimed at understanding the hazards arising from the use of these weapons, discussing possible measures to address these hazards, and exploring options for future work on this issue.