

## MINE ACTION DONORS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held at UNDP on 29 March 2006

Present:

Ambassador A Couanon      Co chair – OSCE Ambassador

Ambassador W Paton      Co chair – UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative

Representatives from the following diplomatic missions and other organisations registered their attendance:

|                    |      |        |
|--------------------|------|--------|
| Embassy of France  | FSD  | SDC    |
| Embassy of Turkey  | ICRC | TMAC   |
| Embassy of UK      | RCST | UNICEF |
| Embassy of the USA |      | UNTOP  |

The meeting opened at 10.05am.

#### **Item 1:      Opening Remarks – Joint Chair**

1. William PATON welcomed all participants to this, the first meeting of the Donors' Consultative Committee of 2006. Mr Paton commented that we live in fear that donors are losing interest in mine action. He continued by speaking about the mine action Completion Initiative and talked about cost effectiveness and productivity in mine clearance being improved this year by the introduction of mine detecting dogs into the Tajikistan; he said that, compared to countries such as Angola and Mozambique, Tajikistan's landmine problem is solvable, if we have the resources most mines can be dealt with in about five years.
2. Alain COUANON spoke about his recent meeting, together with the Belgian Foreign Minister, with President Emomali Rahmonov, when mine action was discussed as a main item on their agenda.

#### **Item 2:      Process of program implementation – J Rajabov**

3. National Mine Action Director, Jonmahmad Rajabov spoke about achievements and outcomes from 2005. He informed the meeting that 1357 anti-personnel mines, and 130,000 square metres of area had been cleared last year but the danger of increased accidents remains high and landmine surveys continue. He also talked about TRCS and UNICEF Mine Risk Education projects in fourteen districts of Rasht and Darvoz and in 22 schools. Last year's income generation project has now run out of money and further funds are needed if the effort is to be sustained this year.
4. **Update on Mine detecting Dogs.** Dogs will arrive from their training in Afghanistan at the end of June and we look forward to a successful demining season this year. Tajik dogs are purchased by UNDP, the national dog centre is built and all is ready for the grand opening to coincide with the International Day of Mine Action, on 4 April. (Since the meeting, Mine action day was celebrated with success and the Tajikistan Mine Detecting Dog Centre was officially opened.

5. Mr Rajabov offered gratitude to our donors so far and expressed a hope that funds might be found to develop the programme so that the obligations of the Ottawa treaty might be met before 2010.

**Item 3: Review of budgets and shortfalls for 2006 – W Lawrence**

6. William Lawrence gave a PowerPoint presentation to explain that funding for mine clearance projects is still one million dollars short of the budgeted target for 2006. After a very slow start, the central coordinating organisation, TMAC, is funded for 2006 and for this, he thanked UNDP and the governments and people of Canada and UK.
7. Mr Lawrence remarked that there is still plenty to do and plenty of opportunity for donors and went on to discuss small projects for Mine Risk Education and Assistance to Victims of landmines. These small projects are all less than \$50,000 each and some projects are less than \$10,000. All Projects are in the Portfolio, but despite the small sums of money required, no donors have yet come forward to fund these projects for 2006. He said that people are suffering for the lack of a few thousand dollars and projects cannot work without funding.
8. **Local responsibility in the creation of local capacity.** It is reported that there are donors who disagree with the concept of nationalisation. The Ottawa convention requires that we nationalise. If there are donors who disagree with a process of staged nationalisation, then TMAC would be happy to meet with you to discuss the issue on the basis of the Final Report of the Zagreb Meeting of states Parties to the Ottawa Convention, which said "*In cases where mine action is largely managed and conducted by foreign NGOs, national ownership and local capacity development should be accelerated*".
9. Mechanical Demining. A confirmed pledge or donor is needed soon, to support our national mechanical clearance project. Probably around \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 would be required to start the project and it is hoped that those nations who are renowned manufacturers of such machines might come forward to offer pledges this year.

**Item 4: Donor activities 2006 – W Paton**

10. Mr Paton picked up the thread of funding for small projects within mine action and told the meeting that UNDP would be prepared to consider a joint effort and share a project with a donor, if possible. He specifically talked about projects in the \$1500 to \$15,000 budgetary range.
11. An Excel spreadsheet was distributed to show pledges made for 2006 and Mr Paton explained the importance of donor funds arriving punctually in order that we might make best advantage of Tajikistan's short demining season, from May to November, as in the past some grants had arrived too late to be used for their intended purpose.

**Item 5: FSD activities update – David Smyth**

12. FSD Project Manager, David Smyth talked about funding for the national clearance program, he confirmed that one million dollars more is needed to maintain the project through 2006 and mentioned that, if donors are prepared to support mine clearance in Tajikistan, the job could be done, but without the support of our donors, productivity this year will be no better than 2005.

**Item 6: Any Other Business**

13. William Paton asked for contributions from the floor. There were no questions or comments about the meeting or any aspect of mine action in Tajikistan.

**Item 7: Closing Remarks**

14. It was announced that the next meeting will be held probably towards the end of June. Because conference room meetings seem to be not very popular, it was suggested that the next meeting should take the form of a field visit to a working mine clearance project. W Lawrence said that this could be arranged and an exact date will be confirmed closer to the event.
15. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1050hrs.

W E Lawrence  
Secretary