

**UNITED NATIONS**  
**INTER AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP ON MINE ACTION**



**MINE ACTION GUIDELINES**  
**FOR CEASEFIRE AND PEACE AGREEMENTS<sup>1</sup>**

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**Background**

1. In countries and regions emerging from violent conflict, mine action is often a prerequisite to the return of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs), humanitarian aid, reconstruction and development. It is therefore of critical importance that ceasefire agreements and peace accords properly address mine action concerns and provide an appropriate framework for the effective initiation and implementation of mine action activities.

2. Too often in the past, essential mine-related issues have either not been addressed at all in cease-fire agreements and peace accords,<sup>2</sup> or addressed too late and inadequately. In the worst cases, they have been addressed in a way that did not take account of technical realities and raised unrealistic expectations, delaying the establishment of proper and effective mechanisms for the implementation of mine action programmes.

**Objective**

3. This paper has been prepared to provide guidance to governments, organizations, and individuals involved in the negotiation and drafting of cease-fire agreements and peace accords. It aims to make them aware of the mine action concerns that need to be addressed, or at least considered, in such documents, and to help them draft appropriate references and clauses related to mine action.

**Key mine-related concerns to be addressed**

4. In situations where landmines are a significant obstacle to the resumption of normal life and reconstruction, cease-fire agreements and peace accords should consider and address seven sets of core mine action activities, related to:

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<sup>1</sup> These guidelines have been endorsed by the Inter Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), which comprises the following UN bodies, DPKO, DDA, OCHA, FAO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, WFP, WHO, and the World Bank.

<sup>2</sup> Peace accords that have contained mine action guidelines are attached at Annex One.

- The exchange of technical information between all former parties to the conflict
- The marking of minefields and the eventual clearance of mines and UXO
- Mine Risk Education
- Victim Assistance
- Eliminating the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of mines
- Stockpile destruction
- International cooperation and coordination

*Exchange of technical information*

5. The parties to the conflict should commit themselves to exchanging all technical information required for the identification, location, marking and eventual clearance of mines, minefields and UXO. The technical information required should conform to the technical annex of Amended Protocol Two of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), that is attached at annex two to this document, and should include maps and information regarding the specific types of unexploded ordnance that could be encountered. The parties should assist with the interpretation of the information exchanged, codes and symbols used in maps and other documents in particular, as well as their translation when required.

6. The agreements may designate the Secretary General of the United Nations, or another intermediary, to serve as the receiver of such information and facilitate the exchange process. Realistic deadlines should be set for the completion of the exchange of the information.

7. In many cases the available information may not be sufficient to allow for the safe implementation of mine clearance activities and survey operations will have to be conducted. In such instances the parties should commit themselves to facilitating unimpeded access to survey teams including flights for the purposes of aerial photography.

*Minefield marking and mine and UXO clearance*

8. The parties to the conflict should commit themselves to actively supporting the identification, marking and eventual clearance of all minefields and UXO. Clear and realistic responsibilities and timelines should be defined in this regard, taking into consideration the technical capacities of the parties involved, and the need to ensure that operations are conducted effectively and safely, in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). All marking and clearance activities should be reported to the designated mine action authorities.

### *Mine Risk Education*

9. The parties to the conflict should commit themselves to actively identifying those people who are most at risk of suffering mine or UXO accidents and support the prompt development of Mine Risk Education (MRE) programmes, which seek to prevent or reduce occurrences of related deaths and injuries. MRE programmes should be undertaken within a rights-based framework, which recognizes the legal and moral obligation and accountability of states to the rights and needs of their peoples. Accordingly, MRE programmes should be integrated with appropriate peace-building activities.

### *Victim Assistance*

10. The parties should commit themselves to providing assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims.

### *The Use, Production, Transfer and Stockpiling of Anti Personnel mines*

11. The parties to the accord should commit themselves to immediately stopping the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of mines, especially antipersonnel mines. For governments, this commitment should involve ratification of, or accession to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, attached at annex three. For Non State Actors, this could involve signing the “Deed of Commitment” deposited with the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, attached at annex four.<sup>3</sup>

### *Stockpile Destruction*

12. The parties to the conflict should commit themselves to the total destruction of all stockpiles of landmines, anti personnel mines in particular, under their possession or control. Realistic deadlines for the destruction of stockpiles should be contained in the peace accord or cease-fire agreement. Stockpile destruction operations should respect all relevant IMAS.

### *International Cooperation and Coordination*

13. The parties to the conflict should normally commit themselves to inviting international cooperation for mine action. When necessary, the parties should agree to request international assistance through the United Nations or other organizations, to facilitate the safe and timely conduct of all mine action activities, in particular during the initial implementation phase of the agreement.

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<sup>3</sup> Governments should also be encouraged to accept to be bound by the terms of the Amended Protocol Two of the CCW.

14. The parties should be encouraged to conduct mine action activities in response to clear humanitarian and socio economic needs so that priority is given to the most vulnerable.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON MINE RELATED ISSUES  
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