



Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan

MACA



Afghanistan's Progress towards a Mine-Free Country Gets a Global Stage

Monday 24th November, Today Afghanistan will join all countries committed to the Ottawa Treaty¹ to provide updates on their progress towards meeting their commitment to landmine clearance and victim assistance. The 9th Meeting of States Parties will take place in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr Adrak, Head of Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Authority, will present on mine clearance. According to the Ottawa Treaty, Afghanistan should have cleared all landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) by 2013. So far, almost half of the hazards have been cleared, however, the challenges ahead remain great and there is an estimated 512 km² still to be cleared.

Mrs Soraya Paikan, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) will present on Afghanistan's efforts to assist landmine victims and other people with disabilities. Mrs Paikan will highlight the successful transition of this part of the programme to Government ownership, highlighted by the first inter-ministerial meeting on disability issues held last month. Another success of the last year has been the training of 14,000 teachers in mine risk education and the integration of mine risk education into the National Curriculum.

Dr Haider Reza, Programme Director, Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan, says: "Since becoming a State Party to the Ottawa Treaty in March 2003, Afghanistan has made impressive progress towards our goals. However, the challenges are great: the scale of contamination, the challenging terrain of

¹ The full title is the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction



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much of the country and ongoing insecurity means that we need more support and creative approaches than ever before.”

About the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan

Mine action in Afghanistan encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, survey and clearance, stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA). Mine action activities reach out to almost every corner of the country. Within this context, the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations currently are working in partnership to implement this vast undertaking through joint responsibility for the coordination, including planning, management, and quality assurance, of all mine action activities in Afghanistan.

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