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**United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
2018 Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional
Weapons - 21 - 23 November 2018**

General Exchange of Views

Mr. Chairperson¹,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action.²

Mr. Chairperson,

This Convention is of utmost importance to the work of the United Nations. I want to pledge the support of my organization to this forum and its various expert groups – which are critical to progress in International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law, and to the protection of civilians.

Conflicts around the world continue to cause relentless suffering for millions of girls, boys, women and men. More than 134 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, largely due to protracted fighting.³ Large numbers of mines, explosive remnants of war (ERW), and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) contaminate rural and urban war zones, maiming and

¹ His Excellency Mr. Janis Karklins; Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia to the United Nations Office at Geneva; Chair, 2018 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW.

² The United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes are: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; Global Humanitarian Need Overview; 2018.



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killing 7,239 people last year.⁴ Yet, we are deeply concerned that this remains underestimated. The lack, and also the denial, of UN access to many conflicts zones remain a major cause of under reporting, or, inaccurate reporting of number of accidents and victims.

The **increase in the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)** is of great concern to the United Nations. The United Nations commends the work conducted within the framework of the CCW, its Protocols, and Experts Groups. The United Nations will continue to provide expert support to High Contracting Parties and Presidencies.

We trust that the coordination of a whole of UN system approach to IEDs under the leadership of UNMAS, requested by the Secretary-General, will also constitute a solid contribution.

Excellences,

The urban nature of modern conflicts has brought violence and destruction, once reserved for remote battlefields, to the doorsteps of the civilian population. Protecting civilians against the devastating humanitarian impact of urban conflict is a key aspect of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, *Securing Our Common Future*.⁵ The Secretary-General has repeatedly called on parties to conflict to avoid the use, in populated areas, of explosive weapons with wide-area effects. He has also advocated for, and committed to, support Member States in the development of a political declaration as well as appropriate limitations, common standards and operational policies in conformity with Human Rights and IHL.

The United Nations also remains supportive of the work done on the humanitarian impact of **Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM)**. Focus on preventing the humanitarian impact of MOTAPM should remain a guiding principle for further work. There is a need to continue research, data collection and reporting on the use and effects of MOTAPM. There continues to be insufficient information on MOTAPM incidents. The United Nations continues to

⁴ International Campaign to Ban Landmine; Landmine Monitor 2018; November 2018.

⁵ United Nations Secretary-General; Agenda for Disarmament: Securing Our Common Future; May 2018.



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advocate for High Contracting Parties to engage in further exchanges in the framework of the CCW.

Universalization, implementation, and strict compliance with the CCW and its Protocols are essential. The United Nations welcomes Mauritius as a new High Contracting Party to the Amended Protocol II and Protocol V and invites States who have not yet joined the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols to do so without delay. The United Nations also urges all parties affected by conflicts to comply with International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law.

Lastly, prevention, Gender, and the Youth agendas should not remain confined to specific forums. The UN would like to stress the importance of integrating gender perspectives in all aspect of the work of the HCPs.

Thank you.