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Chair: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq)
later: Ms. Bacher (Vice-Chair) (Austria)

Contents

Agenda item 47: Assistance in mine action

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 47: Assistance in mine action (A/74/288 and A/C.4/74/L.5)

1. **Mr. Lacroix** (Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations), speaking as Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and introducing the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine action (A/74/288), said that 2019 marked the beginning of the implementation of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2019–2023, which comprised three strategic outcomes, relating respectively to the protection of individuals and communities, victim assistance and national capacity-building, and two cross-cutting strategic outcomes intended to mainstream gender and age considerations in mine action efforts and promote mine action in broader national and international frameworks. He was pleased that those priorities were reflected in the draft resolution on assistance in mine action (A/C.4/74/L.5).

2. Following a steady decrease prior to 2015, the number of casualties caused by mines and explosive remnants of war worldwide had increased since that year, largely as a result of a relatively small number of intensive conflicts in urban and residential areas. Half of those killed and injured were children, and the majority of the casualties were caused by explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, many of which were anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. The task of disposing of such improvised weapons, which were often buried under significant amounts of rubble, posed unprecedented challenges for the mine action sector. The United Nations had been responding to those challenges by developing guidance and policies on the disposal of, and mitigation of threats from, improvised explosive devices, and by providing specialized personnel and equipment to enhance technical capabilities in the field. Those efforts had helped to ensure safe and effective humanitarian and peacekeeping responses. Under the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative, the United Nations Mine Action Service was improving the performance and safety of peacekeepers by supporting the safe and secure storage of ammunition and by reducing peacekeepers' exposure to the risk posed by improvised explosive devices. The Service also provided intensive training and technical expertise to strengthen the capacities of peacekeepers before and after deployment. That work had contributed to a decline in the number of peacekeepers killed by improvised explosive devices in Mali from 24 in 2016 to 8 in 2018, and had enhanced the ability of the troops of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated

Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to detect improvised explosive devices on main supply routes. Such improvements strengthened the performance of peacekeepers and their ability to protect civilians and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

3. Comprehensive mine action had bolstered civilian protection, the sustainment of peace and progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For example, in a number of affected countries in which the United Nations cooperated closely with national authorities and civil society, including Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, civilian casualties had declined dramatically in recent years. Indeed, in 2018, there had been no civilian casualties in Sri Lanka as a result of mines or explosive remnants of war for the first time in 30 years. Moreover, in Iraq, clearance operations conducted by the United Nations Mine Action Service had enabled the United Nations Development Programme to carry out more than 1,200 rehabilitation projects involving roads, bridges and hospitals. Lastly, in Afghanistan, the first ever mixed-gender demining team had cleared one of the last remaining minefields in Bamyan Province, contributing to a safer environment and the fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality.

4. International humanitarian and human rights law in the area of mine action had also had a wide-ranging positive impact, despite recent conflict trends and diminished resources. In the 20 years since its entry into force, the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction had grown to encompass 164 States parties and had helped reduce the production and presence of anti-personnel mines worldwide. However, financial assistance was required to support States in fulfilling their clearance obligations and in reporting on and responding to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. Moreover, the increase in urban conflicts and casualties caused by explosive remnants of war called for greater attention to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, in particular its Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (Protocol V). In addition, while 58 of the 60 mine-affected countries were parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, efforts to ensure respect for the rights of victims and survivors remained hindered by such factors as limited data and inadequate economic and public-health resources. The United Nations was responding to those challenges by building national capacities. In Colombia in particular, it had supported

the Government in launching an online system for registering and monitoring assistance to survivors.

5. The United Nations was committed to fulfilling the mandate set out in the draft resolution and to collaborating with Member States, regional organizations, civil society and the private sector in implementing the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2019–2023. Lastly, he paid tribute to the United Nations Mine Action Service and its staff, many of whom operated under extremely challenging conditions.

6. **Mr. Diarra** (Mali) said that his delegation welcomed the important work of the United Nations system in Mali, in particular that of the United Nations Mine Action Service, which had saved the lives of civilians; members of the national defence and security forces; and the Organization's own peacekeeping force. His delegation also welcomed the consistent efforts made to solicit the support of the international community for the work of the Service, whose financial cost, while significant, was far outweighed by its benefits.

7. **Mr. Husni** (Sudan) said that, since the adoption of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement in 2006, the United Nations Mine Action Service had successfully cleared the eastern part of the Sudan of landmines, work that had recently culminated in a celebration hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. He encouraged the Service to continue that work, which would enable many Sudanese to return to their homes. He also looked forward to further cooperation with the Service and other relevant United Nations entities as the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding progressed in the Darfur region and in Blue Nile and South Kordofan States.

8. **Mr. Al-Qaisi** (Iraq) said that Iraq was grateful for the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations entities in areas of the country liberated from the control of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) had established a joint team that had visited many of the liberated areas. Further efforts would be needed in order to clear those areas of mines and provide a safe passage for internally displaced persons to return to their homes.

9. **Mr. Lacroix** (Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations) said that he appreciated the expressions of gratitude and support by Member States for the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service, which

remained dedicated to cooperating with States to advance mine action.

10. **The Chair** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the item.

11. **Mr. Fernández-Zincke** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, Liechtenstein and the Republic of Moldova, said that the European Union was united in its commitment to the goal of a world free of the threat of anti-personnel mines. All States members of the European Union were parties to the Ottawa Convention, which was a good example of effective multilateralism and international cooperation, combining a strong normative framework with impressive results on the ground. The Fourth Review Conference of the Convention, to be held in Oslo in November 2019, would provide an opportunity to reaffirm the parties' commitment to the Convention, review progress towards its implementation and work towards its universalization.

12. The European Union and its States members collectively constituted one of the leading donors to mine action. Assistance from other international actors could increase the impact of that support. The international community needed to reinforce partnerships among States, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross and relevant non-governmental organizations.

13. All States members of the European Union were sponsors to the draft resolution on assistance in mine action, which would play a vital role in reaffirming the normative framework for United Nations humanitarian mine action activities. The European Union was pleased that the humanitarian dimension of the draft resolution had been strengthened. It also welcomed the streamlining of the draft resolution; the references to the importance of incorporating a gender- and age-appropriate perspective, and of taking into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities; the call on Member States to comply with international obligations related to mine action; the recognition of the efforts of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and the African Union in the area of mine action; the recognition of the contribution of mine action to the 2030 Agenda; and the call on Member States to proactively ensure that mine action, including victim assistance requirements, was funded in a predictable and sustainable manner.

14. **Mr. Prongthura** (Thailand) said that despite the progress made, the threat of landmines nevertheless continued to affect livelihoods and hinder the sustainment of peace and development. Assistance in mine action must therefore remain an integral part of collective efforts to achieve stability and sustain peace. Mine action should be mainstreamed into the Organization's broader work in the areas of humanitarian assistance, development and peace and security. Such action would require a comprehensive, system-wide approach underpinned by stronger coordination within United Nations bodies and among all stakeholders. His delegation supported the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2019–2023 and was confident that its implementation, based on an integrated, person-centred approach, would yield meaningful outcomes.

15. Thailand was committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Ottawa Convention, including the goal of becoming mine-free by 2023. In collaboration with relevant agencies and civil society, the Thailand Mine Action Centre had cleared over 86 per cent of the total contaminated land and had disposed of all its stockpiled anti-personnel mines. In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, mine victim support programmes in Thailand were integrated into disability policies. A national network of emergency response teams ensured that victims received prompt medical attention, and the national universal health-care coverage scheme provided for their equal access to affordable health care, rehabilitation and prosthetics. That support system ensured not only proper care for mine victims, but also their social and economic reintegration.

16. The Thailand Mine Action Centre had worked closely with local communities to display warning signs in affected areas and to incorporate mine risk education into school curriculums. The Centre had also used social media platforms to disseminate safety messages and recommendations, and to encourage information-sharing within affected communities. His delegation commended the Safe Ground campaign recently launched by the United Nations, which was aimed at highlighting the linkage between mine action, sport and the Sustainable Development Goals by turning minefields into playing fields.

17. **Mr. Abusrewel** (Libya) said that, since his country's independence, landmines had been an obstacle to development projects in many regions. Explosive remnants of the Second World War had claimed many victims and caused extensive damage to infrastructure. More recently, landmines planted by armed terrorist groups had come to pose yet another threat to innocent

civilians. His delegation therefore welcomed the Organization's efforts to address that threat, particularly by training local staff to clear landmines and unexploded ordnance. After being driven from Sirte by the Government of National Accord with support from the United States of America, the terrorist organization ISIL had left in its wake numerous death traps that endangered the lives of soldiers and civilians alike. His Government stood prepared to take all necessary measures to attract international support aimed at removing all forms of landmines, organizing training courses, and forming local partnerships to clear landmines from public places.

18. The Libyan Mine Action Centre under the Ministry of Defence was the focal point for relations with specialized international governmental and non-governmental organizations. His Government was especially grateful to the International Committee of the Red Cross for working with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs to rebuild health centres in order to treat landmine victims in Tripoli, Benghazi and Misratah, and to provide long-term care to amputees. He hoped that those agencies would gradually increase their on-site presence, as such programmes were difficult to manage from neighbouring countries.

19. **Mr. Rugeles** (Colombia) said that the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines had claimed numerous victims in Colombia. Demining activities consistent with the principles of the rule of law, security and coexistence were therefore a crucial way to restore the right to land and allow movement and socioeconomic development. The anti-personnel mines in Colombia consisted mainly of victim-operated improvised explosive devices planted by armed non-State actors seeking to protect their respective areas of influence in the context of illegal economies such as drug trafficking and illegal mining. The United Nations could play an essential role in raising awareness of the issue and formulating concrete, sustainable and verifiable plans of action for the benefit of Member States. It was important to gain a deeper understanding of improvised explosive devices, which should be seen as a form of anti-personnel mine requiring a comprehensive and robust approach. In 2018, more than 75 Colombian municipalities, with a population of over one million people, had been declared free of anti-personnel mines.

20. The draft resolution would help to garner international support for mine action. In that regard, it should be recalled that those at risk were not only civilians, but also members of the security services, including those involved in demining activities. In order to raise awareness of the issue at the international level,

his delegation would hold an event at the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention concerning the use of improvised explosive devices.

21. **Mr. Albishi** (Saudi Arabia) said that Houthi militias had indiscriminately planted tens of thousands of landmines in Yemeni towns and villages and along the border with Saudi Arabia, killing and injuring thousands of civilians. In a flagrant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, the militias had also placed naval mines in the Red Sea, posing a threat to the safety of maritime navigation and to international peace and security. In response to that threat, Saudi Arabia had launched an ongoing mine clearance project that had thus far cleared more than 100,000 landmines, explosive devices and unexploded ordnance in Yemen. His Government had also financed the establishment of centres in Ma'rib and Aden that had provided prostheses and rehabilitation for some 1,840 victims. Plans were under way to establish a third centre in Ta'izz. In addition, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre had funded the medical care of several victims at public and private hospitals in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Notwithstanding such measures, international action would be needed in order to disarm the Houthi militias and bring an end to the planting of landmines.

22. **Ms. Al Suwadi** (United Arab Emirates) said that the acquisition or manufacture of landmines by terrorist groups posed a growing threat to civilian lives. Her Government therefore supported a range of regional and international initiatives to achieve a world free of landmines. In Yemen, it had played a vital role in landmine clearance over the previous few years. Its approach focused on, firstly, securing the area; secondly, enabling access for humanitarian assistance and emergency crews; and thirdly, ensuring that normal life could return. Operations had centred on 18 areas along the western coast and Hudaydah governorate, a zone that was home to 700,000 people. Tens of thousands of landmines and unexploded devices had been cleared across the country. In parallel, action had been taken to raise awareness of the threat posed by landmines, with a particular focus on women and children; for example, training sessions had been organized at 270 schools.

23. In Lebanon, her Government had implemented a number of disarmament projects, including, from 2006 to 2009, a project to clear landmines and cluster bombs in the south of the country at a cost of some \$50 million. Some 26,000 anti-personnel mines had been dismantled, and 176 pieces of agricultural land had been returned to the local population after a lengthy absence.

24. In Afghanistan, her Government had implemented a mine clearance programme in Qandahar from 2011 to 2013, at a cost of some \$27,800,000, clearing 72 fields in areas where explosive remnants of war had prevented the local population from accessing schools or basic services. It would continue to work with regional and international partners to clear mines, garner financial and technical support, and exchange skills.

25. *Ms. Bacher (Austria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

26. **Mr. Wisam** (Iraq) said that some 26 million landmines, and millions more unexploded devices, remained buried across Iraq. Unofficial estimates suggested that, in the first month after the end of the recent conflict, some 320 people had been killed in northern Iraq alone, and between 8 and 10 people were injured across the country each day. That situation hampered industrial and economic development, tourism, agriculture and reconstruction, and posed a threat to services and public facilities. It had also prevented displaced civilians from returning to their homes and taken a toll on the country's transport infrastructure. His Government was working to formulate a national strategy on landmine clearance, enact a law on the subject, conduct awareness-raising campaigns, train specialized staff and provide medical care and prostheses. Because landmine clearance required specialized skills and considerable funding, and because numerous rehabilitation centres had been destroyed by ISIL, his Government urged the international community to provide greater technical support and medical care.

27. **Mr. Bahadury** (Afghanistan) said that, having been entangled in a foreign-imposed conflict for more than four decades, Afghanistan had long been suffering from the threat of anti-personnel mines, unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices. It remained one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world; 33 of its 34 provinces were affected. His Government had made notable progress towards its target of clearing all contaminated areas by March 2023, but its efforts were hindered by ongoing armed conflicts. On average, 125 Afghan civilians were killed or injured by landmines, explosive remnants of war and industrial mines every month. That casualty rate was one of the highest in the world, and 59 per cent of civilian casualties were children. Improvised mines were still being used by anti-Government elements as a weapon of choice.

28. Afghanistan had taken over national ownership of its mine action programmes in 2019, and it had recently developed mine action standards for the survey and clearance of contaminated land. A national policy on the

survey and clearance of improvised mines was also in place. While Afghanistan had a detailed workplan for the achievement of mine-free status by 2023, it had not met its clearance target since 2013, partly because of a lack of funding. In order to implement its workplan for the upcoming years, it would need financial support from development partners and international organizations.

29. **Mr. Yamaura** (Japan) said that his delegation strongly supported the draft resolution, remained fully committed to mine action, and paid tribute to the courage and professionalism of all those working in the area of demining. Although 20 years had elapsed since the entry into force of the Ottawa Treaty, the use of anti-personnel mines, particularly those of an improvised nature, continued to pose a serious threat that required urgent attention. Japan was the third-highest contributing country to mine action, with total contributions between 2013 and 2017 of \$235 million. In order to support mine action, there was a need to urgently tackle the threat of improvised explosive devices; provide comprehensive support to victims; raise awareness of mine action and victim assistance; ensure national ownership of mine action; emphasize innovation in mine clearance methodologies, drawing upon advanced science and technology; and foster international cooperation, an area in which Japan would continue to play an active role.

30. **Ms. Keobounsant** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the international community and United Nations system had carried out commendable and crucial work towards reducing the threats posed by the explosive remnants of war. In her country, millions of munitions dropped during the Indochina war continued to kill and maim innocent people, as well as hindering social and economic development. Support and assistance were therefore essential not only to remove those remnants, but also to carry out public awareness campaigns and provide assistance to victims.

31. Her delegation would continue to work closely with the international community to overcome the challenges they faced. With the support of development partners, it was formulating a national standard in the area of mine risk education. Since the previous year, the European Union, Ireland, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States, among others, had pledged to increase their assistance to her country until at least 2022. Six donor countries had also provided assistance through their contributions to the United Nations Development Programme. Her country had worked with development partners to address the issue of unexploded ordnance through surveys and clearance across all its provinces.

32. Her delegation was grateful to all international stakeholders for their long-standing support and assistance. The Lao People's Democratic Republic would continue to work closely with them to eliminate the abovementioned challenges, so as to promote the social and economic development of her country, improving the wellbeing of the people and contribute to the implementation of global development initiatives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

33. **Mr. Zhang Xin** (China) said that, through international cooperation in recent years, significant progress had been made in mine action, successfully addressing many of the humanitarian concerns in mine-affected countries and regions. International mine action should involve full consideration of the national conditions and requirements of the recipients; enhanced capacity-building for mine-affected countries; and the exploration of new cooperative approaches aimed at improving the effectiveness of demining assistance.

34. China faithfully fulfilled its obligations under Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and was an active member of the Group of Experts of the High Contracting Parties under the Protocol. As a former mine-affected country, China fully understood the problems and had been operating a long-term, systematic international demining programme since 1998, providing assistance to over 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America in the form of financing, equipment and training. His Government had also delivered ahead of schedule on its pledge, made in 2015, to carry out 10 demining assistance projects over a period of five years, and would continue to work with the international community to remove landmines and other unexploded ordnance.

35. **Ms. Sok** (Cambodia) said that past conflicts had left her country with significant landmine contamination that had impeded development efforts. In recent decades, however, her Government had successfully cleared most landmine areas through collaboration with international partners, returning those lands to their communities. Her Government had also provided social protection schemes and formulated policies to address the needs of persons with disabilities resulting from landmines. Through the national mine action strategy, resources were being channelled to the most affected areas, and long-term national capacities were being strengthened with a view to achieving zero landmines by 2025.

36. At the regional level, Cambodia hosted the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Mine Action Centre, which worked to address the

humanitarian aspects of unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war. The Centre provided medical and rehabilitation assistance to victims, raised awareness at the community level and cooperated with the United Nations Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. Her delegation was grateful to development partners for their continued technical and financial support, which would be essential in order to achieve the objective of a world free of landmines.

37. **Mr. Ngouambe Wouaga** (Cameroon) said that, over the previous two decades, large quantities of anti-personnel mines had been destroyed and the number of victims considerably reduced. However, that number had recently begun to rise, and the diversification of improvised explosive devices required an urgent change in approach. Cameroon was affected by improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war owing to its fight against Boko Haram and other asymmetric threats.

38. International cooperation and assistance would be essential in order to achieve a world free of landmines, and the United Nations should be commended for its action, which had successfully addressed the humanitarian repercussions of the problem in many affected countries. His delegation was grateful to the bilateral and multilateral partners of Cameroon for their support and urged them to intensify their cooperation in order to build national capacities for mine clearance; conduct studies on the pollution caused by explosive remnants of war; and facilitate scientific research on effective, viable and appropriate demining techniques.

39. **Ms. Syrota** (Ukraine) said that her delegation paid tribute to all stakeholders involved in clearing anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance around the world, particularly the United Nations Mine Action Service. Mine action was at the core of the post-conflict humanitarian response and remained an essential tool for the protection of civilians and humanitarian personnel, as well as for ensuring sustainable peace.

40. Her delegation shared the concerns raised in the report of the Secretary-General (A/74/288) over the growing use of improvised anti-personnel landmines, which had in turn increased the number of casualties, including children. Notwithstanding the progress made in certain countries, the ongoing conflicts and military activities in other States, including Ukraine, were causing new contamination by mines and improvised explosive devices. The armed aggression by the Russian Federation and the offensive actions of illegal armed groups operating in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of

Ukraine had claimed growing numbers of civilian casualties, including children. Two million people in eastern Ukraine faced constant insecurity owing to contamination from landmines and explosive remnants. The national authorities in Ukraine, in close cooperation with international partners, were taking a range of measures to decontaminate and destroy explosive devices in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as raising awareness of mine-related risks in the conflict-affected areas. However, comprehensive demining would be possible only once the hostilities ended.

41. **Mr. Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that bilateral, regional and international cooperation and mine action assistance must be strengthened in order to tackle landmine contamination, which was an obstacle to peace, security and development. The Islamic Republic of Iran Mine Action Centre had been established for the urgent excavation of millions of mines planted by the Saddam Hussein regime of Iraq in the 1980s. Owing to lack of international assistance, Iran had relied on national capacities and domestic technologies. Many of its personnel had been killed or injured. As a result of that experience, the Centre had built up considerable expertise in the domestic production of mine detectors, mine defusing devices and high protection devices for detectors.

42. His delegation welcomed the multi-stakeholder coordination under way for humanitarian demining and supported the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2019–2023. The Centre stood ready to use its knowledge and expertise to assist other affected countries. Accordingly, it had held an international seminar in Tehran from 8 to 11 March 2019 in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross; attendees had included the Director of the United Nations Mine Action Service. Participants had made proposals for cooperation with mine-affected countries, and the Centre had emphasized its readiness to conduct training courses. Financial issues involving the implementation of demining projects and training courses had also been discussed. It would be useful for the United Nations to convene trilateral meetings bringing together the Organization, Iranian stakeholders and representatives of other affected States in order to organize humanitarian demining operations or training courses with funding from donor countries.

43. **Ms. Henderson** (Australia) said that the fourth review conference of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention would offer the international community an opportunity to take stock of progress and consider future action to achieve a world free of landmines by 2025. For instance, collective efforts should be strengthened and aligned, and action should be gender- and age-

appropriate to meet the needs of survivors throughout their lifetimes.

44. Australia supported action in fulfilment of a range of mine action-related conventions, including the work of several international agencies. It contributed to multilateral and bilateral action in such countries as Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Sri Lanka and the Syrian Arab Republic. Her Government had also demonstrated its commitment through concrete actions, including an operation in the South-West Pacific for the removal of explosive remnants from the Second World War, which continued to pose a danger to local communities. It would continue to play a strong, practical role in reducing and mitigating the dangers of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

45. **Mr. Attelb** (Egypt) said that Egypt accounted for more than 20 per cent of the world's landmine total. The landmines, most of which were remnants of the Second World War, continued to pose a threat and to hamper the exploitation of agricultural, natural, mineral and energy resources. His Government called on those States that had planted landmines in the western desert of Egypt to assist with their removal and provide maps and records showing their locations. Egypt had cleared millions of landmines and would continue to do so, including through cooperation with the United Nations.

46. Egypt had engaged constructively in the negotiations towards the Ottawa Convention and supported its objectives. It had not, however, signed the Convention, for reasons which its delegation had made clear during the negotiations. The Convention failed to acknowledge that States that had placed landmines on the territory of other States had a responsibility to provide maps of the minefields and to offer as much support as possible towards demining. It also failed to strike a balance between humanitarian concerns and potential legitimate military uses, particularly in States with extensive borders vulnerable to asymmetric threats. Nevertheless, mindful of the humanitarian ramifications associated with landmines, Egypt had since the 1980s applied a moratorium on their production and export.

Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.5: Assistance in mine action

47. **Mr. Radomski** (Poland), speaking on behalf of the European Union and introducing the draft resolution, said that the States members of the European Union had long supported mine action by providing assistance to affected States. Mine action was critical in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and enable people to lead safe and dignified lives.

48. Several improvements had been made to the draft resolutions adopted in previous years. The humanitarian dimension had been strengthened, and the normative framework for mine action activities carried out by the United Nations system was reaffirmed. The main goal of the draft resolution was to express support for mine action carried out by the United Nations, Member States and other actors worldwide. In the draft resolution, the General Assembly would express concern at the impact of mines and explosive remnants of war, in particular on children, who accounted for nearly half of civilian casualties. The Assembly would also emphasize the importance of taking into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities, and of incorporating a gender- and age-appropriate perspective. In addition, the Assembly would note the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Ottawa Convention. The Assembly would also underline the need for a comprehensive approach to mine action, and would stress the negative impact of mines and explosive remnants of war on the achievement of sustainable development, and on efforts to build and sustain peace. Lastly, he drew attention to some technical revisions to the document.

49. **Ms. Sharma** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Andorra, Argentina, Cameroon, Canada, the Central African Republic, Georgia, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mali, Montenegro, Norway, Palau, Peru, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland and the United States of America had joined the sponsors.

50. **The Chair** invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolution, which had no programme budget implications.

51. *Draft resolution A/C.4/74/L.5, as orally revised, was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.