



**Report of the Geneva Call Follow-up Mission  
to Puntland, Hiran and Bakol Regions**

15-27 September 2004

GENEVA CALL

# Landmines in Somalia



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## Acknowledgements

Geneva Call wishes to acknowledge the patience and invaluable assistance afforded to our field mission by the signatory factions to the *Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action* (Deed of Commitment), community leaders, civil society and international organisations operating in the country. We are particularly grateful to the local authorities and focal persons on landmines of Puntland, Hiran and Bakol regions, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Somalia, Puntland Mine Action Center (PMAC), Save the Children UK and International Medical Corps (IMC).

Geneva Call wishes also to thank the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the Government of Italy for funding this mission as well as the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) for its support.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a real landmine problem in Somalia, though its exact extent is unknown. Landmines appear to be concentrated along the border region with Ethiopia and scattered inside Somalia around towns, military installations and key civilian infrastructure. There seems to be also a widespread unexploded ordnance (UXO) problem.

This contamination, or suspected contamination, has a significant negative impact on the local population: human and livestock casualties, denial of pastoral and cultivable land, road closure, etc.

Existing capacities to address the landmine/UXO problem are almost non-existent. Except in the northern regions, there is currently no international humanitarian mine action being conducted in the country. Some local capacity for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and mine risk education (MRE) exists, but the capacity is very limited. International assistance is therefore imperative to aid Somalia in dealing with the landmine/UXO problem effectively.

As there has been no internationally recognised central government since 1991, Somalia cannot accede to the Ottawa Treaty. However, 16 faction leaders signed the parallel Deed of Commitment, and, as a result of their commitment, they actively facilitated the mission. Many of them became members of the newly established Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and as they move from non-State to State actors, it is imperative that their obligations under the Deed of Commitment be upheld through accession to the Ottawa Treaty.

It is therefore very important for the international community to sustain the current momentum in Somalia and, whatever the fate of the TFG, to provide a rapid and targeted humanitarian mine action response. There exists the necessary cooperation and commitment to ensure that an international response can be established and sustained, at the very least in the regions visited by the mission. In addition, there is a need also to involve civil society in the campaign to ban landmines. Community-based organisations and local NGOs have a critical role to play in advocacy, public awareness and monitoring.



## **I. BACKGROUND**

### **I.A. Political and security environment**

Somalia has been without a functioning, recognised national government since the overthrow of the Siyad Barre regime by clan-based opposition movements in 1991. Particularly in the south, the subsequent division and fighting among them resulted in the killing, displacement, and starvation of thousands of people, leading to the UN military intervention in 1992-1995 (UNOSOM).

A number of local or regional authorities have since come into existence. In the northwest, in the regions that constituted territorially the former British Protectorate of Somaliland, the Somali National Movement (SNM) declared the independence of the Somaliland Republic in 1991. Although not recognised internationally, secessionist Somaliland has achieved some level of stability and self-governance. In the northeast, the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) established in 1998 an autonomous regional administration, Puntland, while in the south, most of the territory has been divided into fiefdoms ruled by rival factions or warlords.

The security situation in northwest Somalia/Somaliland and northeast Somalia/Puntland is relatively stable (apart from the disputed areas of Sol and Sanaag). By contrast, south-central Somalia remains volatile, although armed clashes have been generally localised and short-lived. Pockets of stability exist, especially in central areas, but are prone to sudden setbacks due to clashes among clans vying for control over employment, resources and land allocation.

Since 1991, efforts to rebuild a central state have been numerous, the latest being the Somali National Reconciliation Conference (SNRC) launched in 2002 in Kenya under the aegis of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD). Despite recurrent violations of the Cessation of Hostilities agreement signed in 2002, a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established late 2004. Its relocation inside Somalia and the deployment of an international peacekeeping force are expected to take place in the near future.

### **I.B. Rationale of the mission**

As there has been no internationally recognised central government since 1991, Somalia cannot accede to the Ottawa Treaty. Yet, on 11 November 2002, following lobbying efforts undertaken by Geneva Call on the sidelines of the SNRC in Kenya, 16 faction leaders, including the TFG's newly elected President, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, signed the Deed of Commitment. The Deed of Commitment is an instrument enabling non-state actors and non-recognised authorities to adhere to the mine ban. The commitment entails not only a renunciation on the use of this indiscriminate weapon, but also includes a commitment to cooperate in humanitarian mine action (stockpile destruction, mine clearance, victim assistance, mine risk education, and various other forms of mine action) and monitoring.

As part of its responsibility to follow up to the commitments made by the factions leaders, Geneva Call proposed to send a field mission to assess the country's landmine situation, the progress made in implementing the Deed of Commitment and the need for humanitarian mine action assistance. This was readily accepted by the signatory leaders. The mission was expected to take place in 2003, but was delayed due to security concerns, lack of funding and difficulties in coordinating among factions.

After almost one year of preparation<sup>1</sup>, the mission finally was conducted from 15 to 27 September 2004. It visited signatory areas of Puntland, Hiran and Bakol. In the latter two regions, it was the first time international NGOs came to assess the landmine situation since 1994.

The mission was led by Pascal Bongard, Geneva Call Programme Coordinator, and included the following team members: Didier Bastien, Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) Operations Officer, Nick Bateman, Danish Demining Group (DDG) Programme Manager for Somaliland and Maj (Rtd) Mohamed Noor Ali, Geneva Call Consultant.

The team met with the local authorities of Puntland, Hiran and Bakol regions and their focal persons on landmines (mostly senior military officials of the former national army). It also met with various UN agencies and NGOs operating in Somalia, including UNDP, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), GTZ, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)-Holland, MSF-Belgium, Save the Children UK, IMC, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Diakonia Sweden, Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS), Galkayo Education Centre for Peace and Development (GECPD), Puntland Development Research Centre (PDRC), Somali Environmental Review (SOMER), Baharsaf Cut the Mine Organization (BCMO), Somali Demining Organisation (SOMDO) and the Centre for Peace and Human Rights. Visits were made to mine affected areas, hospitals and military camps.

This report presents the main findings of the mission as a result of intensive consultations in the field, as well as the key conclusions and recommendations.



Photo: mission members with Colonel Nahar Alasow and Sanie Ma'lin in Hees village, Hiran region (Ali Bay/Geneva Call).

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<sup>1</sup> Considerable groundwork was made in preparation for the mission. Extensive consultations were held with signatory factions, UN agencies, IGAD, the African Union (AU), the European Commission (EC), donor governments, German Agency for Technical Assistance (GTZ), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), international and local NGOs operating in the field; information was collected on known or suspected mine areas; focal persons on landmines were appointed and people with relevant knowledge (senior military officials, engineers, former deminers) were mobilised to facilitate the mission.

## II. FINDINGS<sup>2</sup>

### II.A. The landmine/UXO threat

#### II.A.1. Origin of the problem

The landmine/UXO legacy in Somalia is largely the result of over three decades of war:

- Although landmines were reportedly already used during the Italian and British colonial period, they were first laid extensively during the inter-state wars between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1964 and 1977-78. Both armies heavily mined front lines along the border. Mines were used mainly to defend military positions, protect key infrastructure and restrict enemy mobility.
- With the rise of opposition movements against the Siyad Barre regime in the 1980's, areas inland of the border were also mined. Mines were placed by all parties to the conflict around defensive positions and military camps, along airstrips, bridges, water sources, pastures and access roads. The army also used mines along the border to hinder rebel infiltration from Ethiopia.
- After the fall of Siyad Barre in 1991, landmines continued to be used by factions vying for power in Somalia, adding further to the general explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in the country. In 1991-1992, an Islamist group called EI-Itihad fought SSDF forces in the west of Bossaso. Vehicle accidents and road closures suggest that anti-tank (AT) mines were used during these clashes. During the same period, SSDF forces were also fighting with the United Somali Congress (USC) in the area of Galkayo in Mudug region. This led to the establishment of a front line and the de facto southern border of Puntland, which still exists today (the so called "green line"). Both sides are said to have laid anti-personnel (AP) and AT mines along the "green line". In Hiran region, after USC/Somali National Alliance (SNA) forces of late General Aideed attacked Beletweyn in 1994, local militias resorted to mining roads for defensive purposes. In Bay and Bakol, the local resistance, the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA), did likewise. Both RRA and USC admitted to mine use. In 2002, the RRA split into factions, which then engaged in serious clashes with each other, resulting in the further deployment of AT mines. Since 1991, many other factions have used landmines in Somalia, the most recent example being in September 2004 near Kismayo as a result of clashes between the non-signatories Juba Valley Alliance (JVA) and Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) faction of General Morgan.

Landmines have been used also for economic purposes. For example, it was reported to the mission that militia in Bay and Bakol used to lay mines as roadblocks to tax travellers. In southern Somalia, farmers have allegedly laid mines to protect their crops from livestock. The Landmine Monitor also reported that camel herders were using landmines to stop the widespread cutting of trees - a source of food for nomadic people - by charcoal smugglers.

In addition, Somalia has also been contaminated with large amounts of UXOs.

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<sup>2</sup> The mission members consider findings detailed below to be indicative of the situation throughout the regions visited. Details can be provided upon request, including data and maps of mine affected areas.



## II.A.2. Current situation

Although the actual extent of the problem and location of mined areas are largely unknown at the present time outside of Somaliland<sup>3</sup>, the following general trends can be suggested:

- The most extensive areas of landmine contamination appear to be along the border between Ethiopia and Somalia (a distance of approximately 1,800 km) with a mixture of both AT and AP mines. According to the United States (US) State Department<sup>4</sup>, 70% of landmines in Somalia are estimated to lie within barrier minefields along this border, particularly along the Somaliland border with Ethiopia.
- Pockets of both AP and AT mines are scattered inside Somalia around strategically important towns, military installations and key civilian infrastructure such as water sources, airstrips and bridges.
- Many secondary roads connecting villages to cities and one region to another are closed or go unused due to the suspected presence of AT mines<sup>5</sup>.
- There seems to be widespread UXO contamination, particularly along the border with Ethiopia and in former military areas.



Photo: Scattered ERW items in the vicinity of a village in Bakol region. Mines/UXOs are sometimes simply placed below piles of wood, in order to protect people from stepping on them. (D.Bastien/FSD).

Outside Somaliland, the border regions of Bay, Bakol, Hiran, Galgudug, Gedo, Lower Jubba and Mudug are considered to be the most mine-affected.

<sup>3</sup> A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was completed in Somaliland in 2003.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of State, "*Hidden Killers*", September 1998, p.46.

<sup>5</sup> On the road from Huddur to Wajid for example, 28 vehicles were reported to have been blown up by AT mines between 1995 and 1999.



In the regions visited, affected areas include (see annexe 1):

- Burtinle district in Nugal region<sup>6</sup>
- Galkayo/Goldogob/Ethiopian border triangle in Mudug region<sup>7</sup>
- Beletweyn/Hees/Ethiopian border triangle in Hiran region
- Huddur/Rabdhure/Ceelbarde triangle in Bakol region

Landmines identified by the mission are a mixture of AP (blast and fragmentation) mines and AT mines manufactured in the former USSR, Eastern and Western European countries, Egypt and Pakistan. UXOs ranged from artillery, tank and mortar rounds to rocket propelled, rifle and hand-grenades. Additionally, according to a local NGO based in Mogadishu, Somali Demining & UXO Action Group Centre (SOMMAC), surface-to-air missiles, which belonged to the former Somali army, were found in a number of former military garrisons, notably near Mogadishu.

No mention was ever made of an Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) problem during the course of the mission. However, the team found that in certain areas explosives are extracted from AT mines and allegedly made available for sale and trafficking. The end use is unknown, though there are unverified allegations that explosives are used for stone extraction, digging rainwater catchments or even recycled by Islamist militants. Moreover, large stocks of landmines are believed to be in the hands of factions and private individuals. Both AP and AT mines are plentiful in Somalia since the disintegration of the Somali army and can be bought from arms markets in Mogadishu and other towns. Several states (particularly Ethiopia and Yemen) have also been accused of supplying factions with weapons, including landmines.<sup>8</sup>



Photos: PMP 71 AP mines stocks in a military camp in Garowe (D.Bastien/FSD) and UXOs found in Huddur (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Puntland Mine Action Centre/Survey Action Centre, "*Preliminary Opinion Collection*", draft report, September 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Landmine Monitor 2002, 2003 and 2004 and Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1519, August 2004. Geneva Call received similar accusations from faction leaders.

## II.B. The consequences of the presence of mines/UXOs

### II.B.1. Human casualties

In 2003, a local NGO working with the Landmine Monitor, the Somali Center for Research and Documentation (SOCRED), reported at least 75 new landmine casualties in Somalia (Somaliland not included), of which 40 people were killed and another 35 injured. Most of the victims were civilians. SOCRED also recorded 16 UXO incidents during the same period, mostly in Middle Shabelle region. However, landmines accidents are not systematically recorded in Somalia and many cases are believed to go unreported. Hospitals in most regions keep incomplete data on the number and type of victims, and the data that is available is not centralised.

From figures made available to the mission, the Somalia Red Crescent Society (SRCS) stated that 27 mine injuries had been treated at the Galkayo rehabilitation centre in 2003 (an average of two casualties per month). SOMER, a local NGO active in Puntland, reported 188 mine related deaths and injuries in Goldogob district alone between 2000 and 2003 (an average of 4 casualties per month), while in 2003 UNICEF/Handicap International estimated 30 to 50 new victims per year.<sup>9</sup> In Hiran, the assessment team was told that 7-10 accidents occurred per month.



Photo: mine survivors in Belet-Weyne (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

In Bay and Bakol regions, UNDP reported 4,357 casualties between 1995 and 2000 (an average of 60 casualties per month).<sup>10</sup> Information collected during the mission suggests a significant decrease in the number of casualties since 2000. Overall, it seems that most of the accidents reported recently were caused by AT mines and, particularly in Puntland, by tampering with UXOs.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Debert, UNICEF/Handicap International, "Mine risk education feasibility study mission in Puntland", 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Landmine Monitor Report 2001, p.261-2.



## II.B.2. Humanitarian and socio-economic impact

As mentioned earlier, the magnitude of the landmine problem in Somalia and its impact is largely unknown. However, it is reasonable to assume from information collected during the course of the mission that the current level of contamination has a significant negative impact on the local population. Landmine/UXO contamination may not be the most important obstacle to humanitarian relief and economic development in Somalia, but it clearly contributes to hindering these efforts. Specific examples include:

- Loss of life, disability, psychological problems and a continuous state of fear and insecurity between and among affected communities.
- Livestock casualties: Landmines/UXOs do not affect only people, but also sheep, goats, camels, donkeys and, to a lesser extent, cattle. This has a serious impact on the Somali economy, which is largely pastoral. In Puntland for example, SOMER reported 245 livestock casualties in Goldogob district between 2000 and 2003. In Bakol, it was reported to the mission that 40 animals are lost every year in Rabdhure district alone. Landmine Monitor 2001 reports 558 camels, cows and donkeys were killed or injured in Bakol region between 1995 and 2000.
- Movement inhibition: Many secondary roads are either known or suspected to be mined. In either case, the use of the roads is denied to the local inhabitants and travellers. This affects the ability to conduct trade with neighbouring areas and across the border into Ethiopia, thereby contributing to perpetuation of poverty. On some roads, detours have been set up, resulting in increased transportation costs and lengthy delays to get to markets or other destinations. Other villages have simply become inaccessible by road and, as a result, have been abandoned.

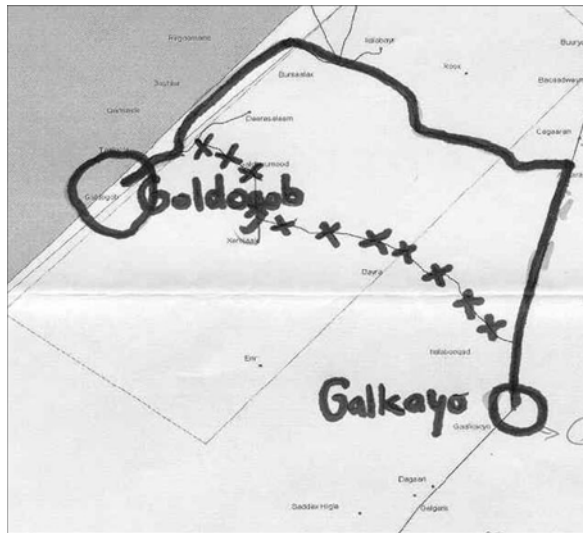


Photo: suspected mined road between the villages of Hees and Ali Ganey in Hiran region (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

Map: as the main road from Galkayo to Goldogob is mined, the diversion involves a journey of 3,5 hours instead of 1,5 hour (PMAC).

- Reduced land available for grazing and farming. The laying of mines along riverbanks has denied use of fertile areas. Nomads are afraid of using their traditional pastoral lands because of the suspected presence of mines. In some areas, the denial of access to water has forced inhabitants to leave their villages and congregate in cities already suffering from overpopulation.

In fact, whether there is actual landmine contamination or not, the impact is real. The local population will not use areas or roads they suspect to be mined.



Photos: on the left, empty water tank in Hiran region (P.Bongard/Geneva Call). Suspected mined roads have made access to villages and civilian infrastructure such as water tanks very difficult. Subsequently, the villages have been abandoned. On the right, unused land along the Shabelle river in Beletweyn (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

## **II.C. Capacities and current activities to deal with the problem**

### **II.C.1. Mine clearance**

Outside of Somaliland<sup>11</sup>, no mine clearance activities are currently taking place in Somalia. The last time demining was reported was in 1993-5 with UNOSOM. UNOSOM supported local deminers in clearing primarily main access roads and urban areas. For example in Bakol, the Geneva Call mission met a local NGO, SOMDO, who reported to have cleared the road between Huddur and Ceelbarde with the support of the French troops under UNOSOM. Similarly, in 1994, more than 4,000 landmines were destroyed in Galkayo.<sup>12</sup> These activities ceased with the departure of UNOSOM in 1995.

However, groundwork for mine clearance was started recently in Puntland. With the support of the EC and UNDP - which had been forced to abandon its efforts in 2002 due to the lack of security - the Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC) was established in February 2004. The PMAC functions as the local mine action coordination body for Puntland. It has recently started to implement a comprehensive LIS in Bari, Nugal and Mudug regions, under the Survey Action Center (SAC) supervision. The LIS is planned to be completed by July 2005. UNDP has also been training three police EOD teams in Garowe and Jowhar but their operational capacity is not known.

Moreover, it seems that some local NGOs are still active in mine action and have been marking suspected areas and removing landmines/UXOs in order to prevent accidents and/or, as the mission could witness in certain areas, to recover explosives. In Puntland for example, SOMER reported to have collected 426 landmines and UXOs between 2000 and 2003. In Bay and Bakol, BCMO reported to have opened six roads since 2000 and removed about 70 mines. The team could not assess the effectiveness of such NGOs but it is apparent they need technical assistance and appropriate equipment.

<sup>11</sup> In Somaliland, two international NGOs, DDG and Halo Trust, are active in mine clearance.

<sup>12</sup> Puntland Development Research Center, "Final Report on Anti-Personnel Landmine Advocacy Workshop", Garowe, 8-9 November 2000, p.6.





Photos: on the left, suspected areas fenced by local inhabitants along the Shabelle river (P.Bongard/Geneva Call). On the right, TM 46 AT mines and UXOs collected by SOMER in Goldogob district (D.Bastien/FSD).

Unfortunately, no maps or records of minefields were made at the time of the laying. However, it was reported to the mission that some maps belonging to the former army may exist. Moreover, senior military officials have a high knowledge of mine affected areas as they were involved in mine use.

#### II.C.2. Stockpile destruction

Besides destruction of removed mines by local NGOs, the mission did not register any case of stockpile destruction. However, it should be noted that several signatory faction leaders, such as Eng. Hussein Farah Aideed, Chairman of the USC/SNA and Mohamud Sayid Aden, Chairman of the Somali National Front (SNF), did declare their stockpiles to Geneva Call and have requested assistance in their destruction. In Puntland, the team was provided access to stockpiles kept in a military camp near Garowe. The camp commander requested assistance to destroy them.



Photo: stockpiles in a military camp near Garowe (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

### II.C.3. Mine risk education

The majority of civilians the mission met with was aware of landmines/UXOs and recognised to some extent the threat they pose. However it appears that this knowledge was not sufficient to prevent cases of high risk behaviour such as going into mined areas, tampering with mines/UXO or recovering explosives. High risk groups are children, pastoralists, internally displaced people (IDPs)/refugees and male adults.

There are currently no international NGO or agency providing MRE in Somalia. Handicap International sent an exploratory mission in October 2003 to Puntland, but has not yet launched a programme. There are some local NGOs that attempt to provide MRE but the effort is limited and confined to small areas. For example, in Puntland, SOMER, with the support of the local authorities and the Somali diaspora, has conducted five mine awareness workshops and training of community members in Goldogob district since 2000. SRCS also conducted awareness workshops in Hiran with ICRC support, as well as BCMO in Bay and Bakol.



Photo: warning material produced by SOMER (D.Bastien/FSD).

### II.C.4. Victim assistance

Like other war-wounded, mine victims in Somalia have limited access to medical care and rehabilitation services. The ICRC provides support to four major surgical facilities in Mogadishu, Baidoa, and Galkayo. However, in the remote areas, which are the most mine-affected, the health care infrastructure is either very poor or non-existent. The few existing hospitals are ill-equipped and lack medicines and trained staff. For example, in Beletweyn, according to SRCS, severely injured people are evacuated to Mogadishu or Galkayo hospitals. Sometimes it can take days for the landmine survivors to reach the nearest health facility. In other cases, they are cured locally or die.

In terms of rehabilitation, there are only two centres available, one established in Mogadishu in 1992 and another one in Galkayo in 1999. They are run by the SRCS with the support of the Norwegian Red Cross and provide physiotherapy and orthopaedic services to disabled people, including mine victims. In Galkayo, mines and UXO patients represent only 15% of the centre's patients. Those who can access come from regions as far away as Hiran and neighbouring Ethiopia.

Apart from SRCS which is the main survivor assistance provider, some local NGOs are reported to occasionally distribute wheelchairs.



Photos: home-made prostheses (D. Bastien/FSD) and SRCS rehabilitation centre in Galkayo (P.Bongard/Geneva Call).

As for reintegration, no mention was ever made of any programme. Victims seem to be left on their own, without work opportunities, thus becoming a burden to their families and the community at large.

#### II.C.5. Advocacy

Although most signatory factions reported to have issued orders or, as in Puntland, adopted a mine action policy<sup>13</sup>, few people seem to be aware of the Deed of Commitment obligations. Little dissemination efforts were reported to the mission. There has been some advocacy work made by local NGOs, such as an advocacy workshop on the AP mine policy organised in November 2000 by the PDRC, but the effort appears to be very limited and on an ad hoc basis. However, many NGOs the mission met with indicated the need to educate local communities regarding the ban and to stigmatise landmine use, as this weapon is still considered by many Somalis as legitimate in certain circumstances like self-defence or for economic purposes.

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<sup>13</sup> Puntland State of Somalia, *National Policy for Humanitarian Mine Action*, 2004.



## III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### III.A. Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached as a result of the mission:

- Although unknown in scope, there is a real landmine/UXO problem in Somalia. Landmines/UXOs appear to be concentrated along the border region with Ethiopia and scattered around towns, military installations and key civilian infrastructure.
- Information collected during the course of this mission shows that the current level of contamination has a significant humanitarian and socio-economic impact on the local population.
- There is currently no international mine action being conducted in central and south Somalia. There is some local capacity for EOD and MRE, but the capacity is very limited. Victim assistance is also not sufficient.
- There is a high knowledge of the risks associated with landmines/UXOs, but equally there are cases of high risk behaviour in certain areas, such as recycling the explosives for economic purposes.
- There seems to be little awareness among the general population of the factions' mine ban commitment. However, there have been no confirmed cases of non-compliance following the signing of the Deed of Commitment and there does exist the necessary political will and cooperation to ensure that a humanitarian mine action response can be established, at least in the regions visited. The mission did not face any security problem, and enjoyed a high degree of cooperation from all levels of society. All personnel contacted were willing to share knowledge and to provide assistance.

### III.B. Recommendations

- There is a need for an emergency EOD response to destroy ERW that constitute an immediate threat to the communities and impede reconstruction. Priority areas are access roads, towns, villages, etc. Stockpile destruction should also be considered as a priority since it will prevent future use by factions and/or Islamist militants. In the mid-to-long term, subject to the security situation, a local mine clearance capacity should be established that integrates demobilised militia members. Clearance intervention should be guided by the LIS findings.
- Since no maps or records appear available, there is a need for a detailed survey to be conducted in central and south Somalia to determine the actual extent of the landmine/UXO problem and allow the international community to plan assistance effectively.
- MRE community-based projects should be developed and target children, nomadic people, IDPs/refugees and people with high risk behaviour. However, it must be recognised that any attempt to heighten the awareness of landmines must be carefully balanced in order to avoid causing undue and generalised fear within the population.



- Medical and rehabilitation services should be provided in mine affected regions such as Hiran, Bay and Bakol. An option that could be considered is to facilitate access of mine victims living in these remote areas to existing hospitals and centres. There is also a need for reintegration and economic support for mine victims.
- The newly established Transitional Federal Government (TFG) should be engaged and urged to accede to the Ottawa Treaty. It is suggested that mine action be considered as a priority for the TFG and national legislation and coordination put in place. In parallel, further efforts should be made to disseminate the Deed of Commitment obligations to local authorities, military commanders, militiamen and community leaders. This could be part of the training courses on International Humanitarian Law being conducted by the SRCS.
- There is a need also to involve civil society in the campaign to ban landmines. Community-based organisations and local NGOs have a critical role to play in advocacy, public awareness and monitoring, and their capacities should be enhanced. This would create a sense of ownership and improve compliance with the mine ban. Focus should be on educating local communities. Many people in Somalia still consider landmines as a legitimate weapon for self-defence or economic purposes. There is a need to challenge this view and stigmatise mine use via an education campaign that could utilise the schools and radio.
- Donor governments and international agencies should commit greater resources to humanitarian mine action in Somalia.

Annexe 1: Map of suspected mine affected areas in regions visited

