



United Nations Mine Action Service
Khartoum, Sudan



*Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Italian Development Cooperation Agency
Section of the Embassy of Italy in Khartoum*

Joint Press Release

Italy Contributes to UN Mine Action Work in Sudan

Support Enables Clearance and Risk Education Work to Get Underway Immediately

Khartoum, 21 January 2016: The Government of Italy gave EUR 250,000 to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) for humanitarian mine action work in Sudan. The support will enable UNMAS to commence an important project aimed at reducing casualties among the Sudanese population and humanitarian field workers in the Kassala province. UNMAS will survey, clear and destroy landmines and other contamination, and undertake a risk education campaign targeting affected populations.

In expressing his appreciation for the generous donation Mr. Habibulhaq Javed, the UNMAS Programme Manager in Sudan, described how the funds will impact and help the people of Sudan. “This contribution will enable UNMAS to clear and release 900,000 sqm of land in the Talkok locality, Kassala province, and will allow us to provide risk education to 5,000 people.” The contribution will also support UNMAS to strengthen the National Mine Action Center’s (NMAC) capacity for quality assurance and project management, resulting in increased national ownership.

Mr. Fabrizio Lobasso, the Ambassador of Italy to Sudan, stated: “Italy is committed to support mine action activities globally and is concerned about the threats caused by landmines and other explosive hazards in Sudan. We hope our support will contribute to creating a safe and secure environment. Through this initiative we want to increase a culture of peace and development. Mines are threats to the life of people but also socio- economic obstacles for the growth of Sudan.”

The Ambassador highlighted the new role played by the Government of Italy as the leader of the mine action support group, and called on other donors to support the work of the United Nations in Sudan. “As the Chair of the Mine Action Support Group, we encourage other donors to join us in supporting this and other UN mine action programmes.”

“Italy shares the vision of the United Nations to achieve a world free from the threat of landmines and other explosive hazards,” he concluded.

Mr. Habibulhaq Javed, the Programme Manager of UNMAS, stressed the importance of the support from Italy. “UNMAS would like to show our sincere appreciation for the support from the Government of Italy to our mine action activities in Sudan. Since UNMAS returned to Sudan in 2015, this is the first grant that our newly launched programme has received. “

UNMAS was present in Sudan between 2002 and May 2013, when it handed over mine action responsibilities to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). When UNDP re-orientated its global activities in late 2014, UNDP and the Government of Sudan requested the re-engagement of UNMAS in Sudan. In response, in March 2015, UNMAS assessed and confirmed its re-engagement in Sudan as of April 2015. UNMAS is committed to strengthening the institutional capacity of NMAC, assisting Sudan with its obligations under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and other relevant international conventions and bolstering resource mobilization efforts of the NMAC to fund land release, risk education and victim assistance.

UNMAS currently supports mine action programmes in Abyei (Sudan/South Sudan), Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur (Sudan), Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and the Territory of Western Sahara (MINURSO).

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Habibulhaq Javed, Programme Manager, UNMAS Sudan
habibulhaqj@unops.org

Ms. Kaori Ozawa, Public Information Assistant, UNMAS
ozawa@un.org

Ms. Chiara Aranci, Communication Officer, IDCA, Section of the Embassy of Italy Khartoum
chiara.aranci@coopitsudan.org