SUMMARY NOTES

Information consultations pursuant to the General Assembly resolution “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”

21 May 2018

Afghanistan, in its capacity as the main sponsor of the General Assembly resolution “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”, convened a second informal consultation on this subject on 21 May 2018.¹

Pursuant to resolution 72/36, and drawing upon salient elements contained therein, this second informal meeting addressed two themes: “Focusing on precursor materials and engagement with industry”; and “The contribution of standards, best practices and guidelines to mitigating and preventing the IED threat”.

In support of States, relevant expert discussants engaged in combatting the IED threat, including those working on humanitarian mine action, arms regulation and in the private sector, were invited to reflect on these two themes with a view to generating discussion among participating delegations.

Thematic discussion 1: Focusing on precursor materials and engagement with industry

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) highlighted several points regarding the need to address IED precursors and to constructively engage with the private sector to stem the flow of potentially-dangerous materials.

UNIDIR noted that any framework intended to counter IEDs will need to vary from good-to-good, sector-to-sector and/or Government-to-Government due to various regional and local specificities and differing regulatory, trade and business-related dynamics within each industry sector. UNIDIR argued that relevant industry-led initiatives must be considered as part of a comprehensive response to the IED threat. It was noted that support from Governments and/or international organizations for these initiatives may help with their wider implementation across industries and companies. UNIDIR also emphasized the need to address “downstream vulnerability” in the supply chain and supported measures such as awareness-raising among industry actors.

International Chemical Trade Association (ICTA), a network of chemical associations, federations and companies, echoed UNIDIR’s concern regarding the downstream vulnerability of the supply chain, including increased risk of diversion as chemicals move outward from the manufacturer. ICTA highlighted industry-led initiatives, such as its flagship Responsible Care Programme, a voluntary commitment by industry to safeguard their chemicals for peace. ICTA also referenced various coordinated initiatives undertaken by industry and Governments that address the provision of intelligence, cyber-security, training and awareness-raising.

¹ The first informal consultation convened in this framework was held in March 2017 and focused on, inter alia, international cooperation and assistance, information sharing and the adequacy of financial support mechanisms to prevent and mitigate the IED threat.

² Non-exhaustive list of participating States: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, France, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Slovenia, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, United States.
**INTERPOL** emphasized its Chemical Risk Identification and Mitigation Project (CRIMP) that supports States in developing measures to detect, deter, and disrupt the access by non-state actors to high-risk chemicals. Under the Chemical Anti-Smuggling Enforcement Project (CHASE), Interpol noted various training provided to law enforcement and border control officers to build their capacity to target the illegal movement of chemicals and related materials which can be used for IEDs. Interpol also informed about Project Watchmaker – a global initiative to identify and track known or suspected individuals involved in the manufacture or use of explosives. Interpol also noted its launch of Programme Global Shield, in cooperation with the World Customs Organization and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, which aims to prevent smuggling and illicit diversion of precursor chemicals.

**Thematic discussion 2: The contribution of standards, best practices and guidelines to mitigating and preventing the IED threat**

**United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)** presented the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), and the resources provided through the UN SaferGuard Programme, in the context of preventing the diversion of ammunition and explosives for the manufacture of IEDs through proper stockpile management. UNODA described the IATG as a modular set of guidelines comprehensively covering ammunition management to address the dual risks of depot explosion and diversion. UNODA informed about support provided through UN SaferGuard, including national capacity building, IATG implementation support tools and guides, as well as regional IATG training courses and outreach activities.

**United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** described its role in IED threat mitigation at the operational level through training, mentoring, advising and equipping Troup Contributing Countries. UNMAS also noted its work at the strategic level through development of relevant policy and standards. UNMAS briefed on its coordination of the development of IED Disposal Standards (IEDDS). Its described the need for technical guidance to respond safely, effectively and efficiently to the complex problem of IEDs. It noted the IEDDS apply to non-humanitarian settings (as IMAS apply to the humanitarian space) and are for use by United Nations personnel. UNMAS informed that the IEDDS have been approved by senior management and will take effect in June 2018. It was also noted that IED-related updates to IMAS have been initiated under UNMAS’ coordination.

**Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)** highlighted the importance of standards that are fit-for-purpose in dealing with IEDs within the humanitarian sector. GICHD noted there is consensus within the global mine action community that the IMAS need to evolve to address IEDs. GICHD underscored the importance data to inform risk analysis and threat assessments; the need to establish minimum reporting standards for work related to IEDs taking into account Convention obligations; the need to develop additional guidance specific to urban environments; and the need to ensure that mine action operators maintain their humanitarian principles.