

Minutes of the meeting of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) Steering Group  
Tuesday, 1 September 2020  
Held virtually via Microsoft Teams

Participants

Chair	Ms. Ilene Cohn, Deputy Director, OiC UNMAS, assisted by Mr Dilup Nanayakkara UNMAS New York (NY)
Secretary	Mr. Richard Boulter, UNMAS
UNICEF	Ms. Meritxell Relaña Arana, Director, Office of Emergency Programmes-Geneva, assisted by Mr. Hugues Laurence, UNICEF, NY
UNOPS	Mr Amir Omeragic, representing Mr. James Provenzano, General Counsel & Director, UNOPS NY
UNDP	Mr Steinar Essen, Development and Mine Action Specialist Istanbul Regional Hub and Ms Oksana Leshchenko
GICHD	Ambassador Stefano Toscano, assisted by Mr. Rory Logan

The meeting commenced at 0900 EST/1400 CEST.

Ms. Cohn opened the meeting and, after introductions and confirmation of the acceptance of the minutes from the previous meeting, the group agreed it had the authority to make decisions relating to the revision of Steering Group membership and to task others to prepare the options and drafts for the Steering Group to consider pursuant to its endorsement of specific recommendations in the EY report.

**On membership of the Steering Group**

Ms. Cohn noted that successive MOUs between UNMAS and the GICHD made clear that the GICHD is a full member of the Steering Group and the Review Board.

After discussion on how to proceed with revisions to the Steering Group membership it was concluded that the existing membership had the authority to make recommendations to the IACG-MA regarding changes to the membership and that the process should not impede the development of new rules and procedures or other recommendations from the EY report.

It was agreed that the decision to include representation from a national authority and a donor was approved at the last SG meeting. There was no conclusion reached on how to appoint either party. For the donors the Chair of the MASG is likely to be a more practical choice than the Chair of the APMBC Article Five Committee. The MASG could be approached to help determine how a member might be selected. For the national authorities, while it was recognized that it is important to give them representation, whom to invite was far from straightforward. The SG would need to be given options to consider.

**Role of the Chair of the Review Board**

It was agreed that the voting rights of the UNMAS Chair be transferred to the UNMAS Observer/Member of the RB, but no decision was made as to when this should take effect.

### **On new terms of reference and rules of procedure**

It was agreed that the terms of reference (ToR) for the RB Chair should be re-written and that ToR for the Chair and Secretary of the SG should be drafted. It was agreed that various rules of procedure detailed in the EY report must be drafted and that there is a requirement to improve the way that operating procedures are documented. To this end a drafting committee will be co-led by UNMAS (Richard Boulter) and the Secretary of the Review Board (Rory Logan, GICHD) and will comprise from one delegate from each of the Steering Group members (UNDP, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNMAS, GICHD).

### **On position of the Secretary to the Steering Group**

Ambassador Toscano stressed that GICHD was not asking for the role of Secretary to the Steering Group but confirmed that the Centre would certainly be willing to play the role in a neutral way as it had done at the RB level for many years.

It was agreed that rules of procedure can be put in place that will allow the GICHD to provide an independent Secretary to the Steering Group, reporting to the Steering Group Chair.

Ms. Cohn concluded that it was agreed that GICHD would adopt the role of Secretary to the Steering Group, while also maintaining its full membership of the SG. The drafting committee should consider the detailed recommendations made in the EY evaluation when revising the ToR for this role.

### **On the rotation of Review Board members and improving the gender balance**

It was agreed that membership of the Review Board should be reviewed every three years. It was agreed that the rotation of representatives should be managed with a view to achieving a better gender balance. The drafting committee are to provide the Steering Group with draft procedural options to consider.

### **On adding a legal specialist**

There was a discussion on the EY recommendation to bring more legal expertise into the Review Board that concluded that inviting the (APMBC, CCM and CCW) Implementation Support Units to rotate in an on one observer seat would provide the necessary expertise relating to treaty compliance issues. ICRC might also be able to provide legal advice and should to retain its seat as an observer.

### **On Communications**

It was noted that the minutes of both the Steering Group and the Review Board meetings are already published on the IMAS website, as are quarterly reports on progress made against the IMAS Workplan. Ambassador Toscano suggested that the Group might investigate more prominent communication of IMAS issues at the NDM. This might also serve as a way to engage further with the national authorities.

### **On New Terminology**

The terminology approved by the IMAS Review Board in 2018 and 2019 was adopted with no objections.

### **On communicating with the Review Board on the EY report**

It was agreed that the co-chairs of the drafting committee should communicate with the Review Board and ask the RB members to provide input on how best to proceed with implementing those findings that the SG had endorsed.

### **On the way forward**

It was stressed that the drafting committee should aim to make swift progress so that proposals can be endorsed by the Principals ahead of the next Inter Agency Coordinating Group meeting in December 2020.

The Review Board to continue with streams of work that are related to the approved IMAS workplan (see Annex to minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> February SG minute). All new proposals are to be parked pending the adoption of new rules and procedures for the Review Board.

The meeting ended 1030 (EST) 1530 (CEST)