

COMMUNIQUÉ -The Board of donors for demining in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Board of Donors for Demining in Bosnia and Herzegovina met in Sarajevo on 11 December 2001. The Board welcomed the new Ambassadors from the United Kingdom, H.E. Mr. Ian Cliff, the United States of America, H.E. Mr. Clifford Bond, Sweden, H.E. Mr. Anders Mollander and Italy, H.E. Mr. Saba d'Elia, who were attending for the first time.

The Deputy Minister for Civil Affairs and Communication, Mr. Milan Lović, addressed the Board and outlined the political importance, which the Government of BiH places on demining. He spoke about the plans for the development of a long-term strategy for demining and its significance in relation to BiH's bid for the Winter Olympics in 2010. The Deputy Minister outlined the State and Entity budgets for next year, which will see a significant increase over previous years.

The Demining Commission for BiH described the progress with some critically important topics in demining. The Board was pleased to note the progress with the Demining Law through the State parliamentary process and its significance in relation to the restructuring of demining and mine action in BiH.

The Board of Donors received the BiH Mine Action Centre's Action Plan for 2002 which outlined its plans for the coming year as well its report on the status of mine action in 2001. They were pleased to note that it forecasts a significant increase in planned output over 2001.

In a wide ranging discussion, the international members of the Board of Donors emphasized the need to raise the overall awareness of the importance of demining to the development of

BiH as a state and to improving its economy.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for sometime in the first quarter of 2002 when it will be addressed by the Tri-Presidency. It also looks forward to receiving news on the progress with the development of a long-term strategy for demining in BiH.

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Henrik Kolstrup Resident Representative United Nations Development Programme Co-Chairman of the Board of Donors