

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING BETWEEN
**Norwegian People's Aid and
The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
31 January 2011**

**GLO-09/188 NPA MULTI-YEAR COOPERATION AGREEMENT MINE AND
CLUSTER MUNITIONS 2009-11**

THE NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA)

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The Deputy Director General of the Section for Humanitarian Affairs, Susan Eckey, presented the agenda for the meeting, and the agenda was approved. State Secretary Espen Barth Eide was also informed of the meeting.

OPENING STATEMENTS

The MFA expressed their general satisfaction with the co-operation with NPA. The framework agreement is based on Norway's obligations under the Mine Ban Convention (MBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and that humanitarian disarmament is a policy priority (with reference to Report to the Storting no. 40 2008-2009).

The MFA congratulated NPA for the achievement of providing assistance enabling Zambia to announce they had fulfilled their obligations under Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in July 2010, even before the Entry into Force of the Convention. Furthermore, the MFA congratulated NPA with the contribution towards Moldova succeeding to destroy its complete stockpiles of cluster munitions under its territorial control, thus meeting its obligations under article 3 of the CCM before the Entry into Force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The MFA also recognised the importance of the work by NPA in methodology development related to cluster munition clearance in Lao PDR.

The MFA expressed its appreciation for the policy and advocacy work undertaken by NPA in 2010, as well as the work done on concept development. It is the Ministry's understanding that these two projects help ensure the ability of the NPA to be at the forefront of multilateral policy work, as well as an ability to make strategic, long-term and informed decisions and prioritisations regarding its work. It was stated by the MFA that the inclusion of armed violence into the framework was seen as a positive development of the policy work, and that the policy dialogue between MFA and NPA on this topic should continue.

The MFA also underlined the importance of reporting on results and achievements in line with the conditions set out in the contract and the framework agreement, and with reference to recommendations of the 2009 COWI Evaluation Report.

The MFA underlined that the cooperation during 2010 as the second year of the framework agreement built on lessons learnt and experiences from the first year. In 2010 we were able to have both a better and more continuous dialogue on our strategic partnership, and better communication and follow-up on issues directly related to the agreement and specific projects. This is seen as a crucial success factor in the partnership both by the MFA and NPA. Also, the importance of maintaining a dialogue between the advisors in Oslo at MFA and NPA, and between the Embassies and NPA programmes in the field was raised as an issue to follow up. This dialogue has been better in the second year of the cooperation agreement, and the MFA was also able to have a better dialogue with the Embassies this year during the preparations for the annual meeting. The MFA has been requested to make the management of grants more effective, and has seen that the frame agreement contributes to this.

NPA stated that 2010 had been a good year for the strategic partnership with MFA and the benefits of having a frame agreement is becoming increasingly evident. It provides NPA with a better tool to strategically develop the programme portfolio in line with the NPA global Mine Action strategy, as well as providing a basis for thematic expansion to include armed violence in particular.

NPA expressed its recognition and appreciation of the close cooperation and partnership with the MFA. The frame agreement has provided a more predictable and flexible approach to meeting common objectives within the framework of Norway's humanitarian strategy on disarmament and human security. Following the experiences from 2009, this has become even more evident in the second year of the implementation of the agreement. The framework agreement allows NPA to think strategically about its global activities, within the framework of the MBC and CCM, for the best and most forceful impact at any point in time. It has also concentrated and improved efforts to understand and report on results at all levels, making programmes more based on evidence. There is some room for simplification in the administration of the agreement, and this should be addressed during the review of the cooperation agreement which will take place during 2011.

NPA also congratulated the MFA and complimented the leadership shown by the President during Norway's presidency for the Mine Ban Convention. It will be important to follow up on the work done during 2010 with the current President.

GENERAL ISSUES

Strategic Partnership

- The MFA and NPA discussed their strategic partnership on anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and armed violence. The MFA emphasised the benefit of having a partner organisation involved on all levels from the field to international advocacy and multilateral diplomacy.
- The MFA expressed its appreciation for the role played by NPA in multilateral meetings under the Mine Ban Convention, and for continuing to focus on real and identified needs for example with regard to effective use of resources, and with regard to efficiency in international financial mechanisms. In particular, MFA and NPA work closely together on the issue of international cooperation and assistance. The MFA underlined the continued importance of focusing on States Parties' compliance with their legal obligations, and expressed appreciation for the NPA's focus on completion.
- The MFA expressed its appreciation for the constructive work of the NPA in focusing on immediate and effective implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, for instance by using its experience from clearing cluster munitions in Laos to develop policies regarding effective methodologies. In addition, the MFA underlined the importance of a continued focus on how to address concrete challenges with appropriate action without developing unnecessary and bureaucratic international mechanisms. The MFA stated its appreciation of cooperating with the NPA to ensure that an implementation structure for the Convention on Cluster Munitions should be as effective as possible.
- The MFA expressed interest in NPA's special project on explosive violence and underlined the importance of developing this policy line based on solid knowledge and thinking around the different political, legal and other policy questions connected with this issue.
- The MFA underlined the importance of NPA's continued engagement in international NGO networks in order to ensure a strong voice from the field in multilateral advocacy work.

COWI Evaluation Report

- The MFA requested from NPA an update on the follow-up of the COWI Evaluation Report, with reference also to the work undertaken under the project Concept Development, including:
 - Better documentation of socio-economic impact and work on NPA's Task Impact Assessment
 - Gender impact and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security. The MFA stressed the importance of both the aggregate report and *all* the country reports to report satisfactory on this matter.
 - NPA took note of the comment to review and acknowledged the importance of reporting satisfactory on this issue and of including an overall analysis of the status of implementation of this work in the programmes in future reports.
 - As an effort to better incorporate cross cutting issues in the NPA programmes, these are sought incorporated into the revised TIA concept that will be rolled out during 2011.
 - NPA also stated that they have put efforts into improving reporting on indicators specific to gender and UNSCR 1325, but also invited the MFA to a dialogue on the issue – in particular relating to how NPA as a mine action operator is expected to influence this outside its own programmes.

Also there is a challenge related to identifying good and measurable indicators for measuring gender impact, and to “calibrate” the NPA actions on the right level.

- The MFA reiterated that satisfactory integration of the gender dimension and UNSCR 1325 is a precondition for grant awards for the NPA and that this should be highlighted in reports in terms of methods used, documentation of measures made and analysis of results. This will also be part of the terms of reference for the review of the frame agreement which will take place during 2011. The MFA also stated that NPA, with method development as one of its strengths, should also be looking at this as an area of development and also draw on the competence internally in NPA.
- Follow-up of the recommendations regarding internal management structures and organisations
 - NPA has during the past year made several efforts to improve the internal management structures and organisations;
 - Consolidation of the responsibilities of the two Deputy Directors in terms of strategic, technical/operational issues and the follow-up of the programme portfolio.
 - Considerable efforts have also been put into improving the consistency in the “result chain” in terms of the global strategy of NPA mine action, the country programme strategies, annual plans and reporting. The frame agreement has also lead to NPA introducing the “Results Matrix” as a new tool to systemise results reporting on a goal/outcome level for all programmes.
 - NPA has established the NPA Operational Management System (NOMS) that will be rolled out throughout the programme portfolio during 2011. The NOMS is an initiative to improve NPA capabilities to document results and standardize our methods, with a focus on non-conformance reporting.
 - The importance of including a capacity building component when planning to close a country project, with particular reference to Uganda, Zambia and Georgia which were ended in 2010.
 - The role of NPA in capacity building projects in general depends on the situation in a particular country. NPA currently has one advisor working on developing a “NPA manual” on capacity building. All NPA programmes are also required to have an internal programme specific capacity building plan.
 - The MFA repeated that when going through the Final Report from 2009 and from 2010, the MFA will in particular emphasise documentation of results and the relationship between objectives and indicators.

The MFA requested from NPA: A general update on fulfilment of agreed obligations in 2010. The update has been included under the bullet points above. It was also underlined that the follow-up of the COWI report is monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

GLO-09/188 NPA Framework Agreement for Mine Action Programme 2009-2011.

The MFA informed NPA that the expected date of transfer for 2011 will be within two weeks upon the MFA and NPA having mutually approved the agreed minutes from the annual meeting.

Funding

The funding under this multi-year cooperation agreement is:

2009: NOK 94 400 000

2010: NOK 95 100 000

2011: NOK 95 900 000

Risk Management

- The MFA requested from NPA: Updated assessment of risk and risk management undertaken by NPA, considering that many of the projects are carried out in unstable areas. The MFA emphasised that in addition to identifying risks it is essential to work on risk mitigation and management, something which in some cases seems to be missing in the various Plans of Action.
 - NPA acknowledged there is room for improvement in reporting on this issue and took note of this request. However, NPA stated that this is in place to a higher degree in practice and accounted for the measures taken in terms of risk management in the programmes. In particularly demanding programmes and in every new programme a risk and stakeholder analysis is developed and regularly revised. The Concept Development project has been crucial in this work as it allows NPA to undertake assessments prior to having secured programme specific funding, thus allowing for a more thorough planning of new programmes.

Preliminary progress and financial report for 2010

- Progress reports received by 8 January 2011 are in general satisfactory and explain achievements. The reports also compare progress with work plans approved and planned outputs, and explain divergences from plans.
- Financial reporting is good and expenses are according to budget.
- Preliminary financial report and progress report have been considered by the MFA.
- With reference to the Final Reports for 2009 submitted in August 2010, MFA stressed the importance of *all* the national audited projects accounts to be in accordance with international audit standards, thus including *the same* required statements: “*accounts for the grant have been kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles*” and “*the grant has been used as stated in the application*”.
- NPA took note of these remarks.

Annual meetings

- The MFA noted its appreciation of the summary of NPA’s reports and proposals as provided in the document “*GLO-09/188 Preliminary Status Report 2010. Executive Summary*” and “*GLO-09/188 Priorities and planning 2011*”. MFA emphasised the usefulness of such documents in preparing the annual meeting. MFA also underlined the importance of including an analytical and aggregate approach to the results as reported in the country-specific reports, for instance on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325.

- **Bosnia/Global Training Centre:**

Budget 2011 NOK 3 500 000

- The MFA informed NPA of its approval of NPA's proposal on the basis of the justifications given on the Global Training Centre project in the document "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011. Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Global Training Centre for Mine Detection Dogs*".
- The MFA requested an update on the financial sustainability of the centre, with reference to the findings of the COWI Evaluation Report.
- NPA gave the following update:
 - Not reducing the importance of Mine Detection Dogs as a tool in NPA programmes, the plan is to not include the GTC in the possible new frame agreement to be negotiated later this year.
 - The continued management of the centre will be sought financed through private donors (through the NPA CSR programme) and also funds from the 2011 telethon will be channelled to GTC. In addition, although not a commercial centre as such, GTC has been generating funds from sale of dogs that does not meet the criteria required to be deployed as a NPA Mine Detection Dog.

- **Policy and Advocacy:**

Budget 2011 NOK 3 000 000

- The MFA informed NPA of its approval of NPA's proposal on the basis of the justifications given on the Policy and Advocacy-project in the document "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011. Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Policy and Advocacy*".
- The MFA appreciated NPA's engagement within advocacy and policy work in the follow-up of the CCM and the MBC, and its efforts to influence and participate in global boards, conferences and forums. Furthermore, the MFA stresses the relevance of this project in the work on developing and implementing the CCM and MBC, and the on-going development of an Explosive Weapons agenda.
- NPA underlined the importance of the Policy and Advocacy project in terms of being able to contribute in international arenas and policy development. In 2011 NPA will develop its position on explosive violence with the aim of building a civil society coalition on this thematic issue, in addition to continue the work on the two conventions. As was the case with the CCM and MBC, the policy work on explosive violence will be based on field work.

Proposed new projects

The MFA referred to "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011 - Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 DR Congo*", "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Mauritania*", "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Zimbabwe*".

- **DR Congo:**

Budget 2011 NOK 2 500 000

- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve NPA's proposed project in DR Congo as outlined in the documents "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011. Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 DR Congo*".

- The MFA informed NPA that it appreciates the initiative hereby taken by NPA to assist DR Congo in fulfilling its obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Convention in 2011.
- The MFA emphasised the need for NPA to consult closely with other established mine actors in DRC, including in particular UNMACC with regard to geographical location of NPA's efforts and prioritisation, with reference to previous dialogue on this.
- NPA took note of the comments of MFA and reiterated the commitment of NPA to work with the stakeholders present in the programme countries in a coordinated manner to ensure that funds and resources allocation to mine action are utilised in the most efficient and cost effective manner. Furthermore, NPA emphasised the benefit of the Embassy participating during the assessment mission conducted in 2010.

- **Mauretania:**

Budget 2011 NOK 3 000 000

- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve NPA's proposed project in Mauretania as outlined in the documents "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011. Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Mauretania*".
- The MFA informed NPA that it appreciates the initiative hereby taken by NPA to assist Mauretania to fulfil its obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Convention.
- NPA updated the MFA of the recent assessment mission to Mauritania.

- **Zimbabwe:**

Budget 2011 NOK 3 000 000

- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve NPA's proposed project in Zimbabwe as outlined in the documents "*GLO-09/188 Priorities and Planning 2011. Overview for discussion 2010*", "*GLO-09/188 Country Budget Overview*" and "*GLO-09/188 Plan of Action 2011 Zimbabwe*".
- The MFA informed NPA that it appreciates the initiative hereby taken by NPA to assist Zimbabwe in fulfilling its obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Convention in 2011.
- MFA noted the special conditions in Zimbabwe and underlined the importance of risk management with reference to issues identified through the dialogue between the MFA and NPA. Furthermore the MFA underlined the importance for NPA to obtain more donors for the next years. In addition, MFA emphasised the need to ensure good cooperation with Mozambique and coordination of efforts on both sides of the border.
- NPA took note of the MFA comments and updated MFA of the upcoming assessment to Zimbabwe. NPA will take the above comments into consideration during this assessment and the planning, in addition to coordinating the visit with the NPA Development Department.

Ended projects:

- **Uganda:**

- The MFA informed NPA that the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala reports positive on NPA's work in Uganda, and how the MFA appreciated NPA's flexibility as a clearance operator and focus on countries where clearance can be completed quickly.
- The MFA requested an assessment from NPA on Uganda's capacity to address its remaining mine clearance challenges within its extended Article 5 deadline.

- NPA has from Head Office and via the Sudan programme followed the activities in Uganda, but it has been a challenge to establish a clear picture of the situation in the country. It is the opinion of NPA that the national authorities themselves might not have clear view of the situation and it could be argued that there is a need for a national survey. NPA has stated to Ugandan authorities and Danish Demining Group that we may be available to assist with a similar intervention to the one made in 2010 upon request and subject to availability of funding.
- **Zambia:**
- The MFA informed NPA that the Norwegian Embassy in Lusaka reports positive on NPA's work in Zambia, where cleared areas have been released and used for farming. The Embassy underlines the importance of how NPA has cooperated closely with Zambian authorities, especially with the Zambian Anti-Personnel Mine Action Centre.
- The MFA informed NPA that it appreciates the initiative hereby taken by NPA to assist Zambia to fulfil its obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Convention.
- NPA stated that Zambia has the capacity to deal with any potential residual capacity and that the dialogue with Zambian authorities is still being maintained after the completion of the project.
- **Georgia:**
- The MFA to inform NPA that the Norwegian Embassy in Baku reports positive on NPA's work in Georgia and stress how the authorities in Georgia appreciated the work conducted by NPA.
- NPA gave a short brief on the total programme of NPA in Georgia. The programme was completed in mid-2010.

Transfer of unspent balances from 2010

The MFA referred to “*GLO-10/188 Priorities and planning 2011 – Overview for discussion October 2010*” received from NPA 8 January 2011 and “*GLO-09/188 Transfer of funds from 2010 to 2011 – Justification and budgets*” received 25 January 2011 and “*GLO-09/188 Transfer of Funds from 2010 to 2011 – Justification and budget Tajikistan*”.

NPA reported that approximately 750 000 NOK remain unspent from the 2010 grant in accordance with the spending projections per December 2010 and as specified below. NPA informed the MFA that the closing of its 2010 accounts was still not completed as per NPA accounting guidelines, and that the end of year financial closing will be finalised by 15 February 2011. Both the MFA and NPA noted that the final amounts may therefore differ when the 2010 accounts are closed.

The MFA commended NPA for its achievement in adhering to agreed budgets in general, while referring to its previous comments on South Iraq. The MFA repeated the understanding from last year's discussions that it will not be possible to request transfer of funds from 2011 to 2012, as the timeframe for the agreement is until the end of 2011. NPA confirmed its understanding and acceptance of this.

- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve the transfer from 2010 to 2011 as requested by NPA in the document “*GLO-09/188 Transfer of funds from 2010 to 2011 – Justification and budgets*” and “*GLO-09/188 Transfer of Funds from 2010 to 2011 – Justification and budget Tajikistan*”.

South Iraq: NOK 409 404 transferred to the South Iraq 2011 budget
Thailand: NOK 119 843 transferred to the Thailand 2011 budget
Vietnam: NOK 162 259 transferred to the Vietnam 2011 budget.
Tajikistan: NOK 67 133 transferred to the Tajikistan 2011 budget.

Upon closing of the 2010 annual accounts for the Guinea Bissau project an over-expenditure on the 2010 budget was identified. NPA submitted a request to the MFA for approval of transfer of the over-expenditure to 2011, reducing the 2011 Guinea Bissau budget accordingly.

- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve the transfer of over-expenditure from 2010 to 2011 as requested by NPA in the document “*GLO-09/188 Revised Budget Guinea Bissau 2011*” submitted 04.03.2011.

Guinea Bissau: NOK 271 361 over-expenditure transferred to the Guinea Bissau 2011 budget.

Approval of revised budgets 2010

- **Policy and Advocacy:**

Original budget 2010:	NOK 3 000 000
Revised budget 2010	NOK 3 272 696

- NPA proposed to the MFA a reallocation of funds to mark the Entry into Force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions 1 August 2010 with the event “Beat the Drum to Ban Cluster Munitions” during Norway Cup, including the funding of a Ugandan football team. Since the unspent balance from the 2009 policy budget was higher than projected when transferred from 2009 to 2010, additional funding was not needed to cover the extra costs.
- The MFA informed NPA of its approval of NPA’s proposal on the justifications given in the “*GLO-09/188 Preliminary Progress Report 2010 Policy and Advocacy*” and “*GLO-09/188 Policy and Advocacy – Comments to revised budget 2010*”, and as discussed with the MFA in advance of the event of 1 August 2010.

- **Programme and Concept Development**

Original budget 2010:	NOK 2 455 323
Revised budget 2010	NOK 2 455 323

- NPA proposed to the MFA that the remaining NOK 1 000 000 which was not utilized due to the closure of the REST project is allocated to initiate a cluster munition survey project in Cambodia in 2010/2011.
- The MFA informed NPA of its decision to approve the allocation of the unspent funds as requested by NPA in “*GLO-09/188 Priorities and planning 2011 – Overview for discussion October 2010*”, “*GLO-09/188 Preliminary Progress Report 2010 Programme and Concept Development*” and “*GLO-09/188 Programme and Concept Development – Comments to revised budget 2010*”, and as discussed with the MFA in the informal meeting between the MFA and NPA in October 2010.

REVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND PROCESS TOWARDS A POSSIBLE NEW AGREEMENT FROM 2012

The MFA informed the NPA on the progress of initiating a review of the framework agreement in order to arrive at a good basis for discussing the possibility of a new agreement from 2012. The review will be conducted by NORAD

The MFA expressed its general satisfaction with the current framework agreement, and its interest in continuing such a strategic partnership in the coming years. The MFA and the NPA discussed timeframes and process for submission of a new proposal on which a possible new agreement could be based. The MFA underlined the importance of a substantive and strategic dialogue in advance of final submission of such a new proposal.

It was agreed to call a separate meeting to discuss the process of negotiating a potential new agreement. The aim of the process will be to have a potential new agreement in place before the end of 2011.

OTHER ISSUES

The MFA, with reference to the COWI evaluation report, suggested that next year's annual meeting cover the whole range of the cooperation between the Section for Humanitarian Affairs and the NPA, including humanitarian assistance not covered by the framework agreement or related to humanitarian disarmament. It was agreed that the framework agreement would remain the main topic of the meeting.

It was also agreed to hold formal semi-annual meetings to discuss the progress of the programmes covered by the frame agreement. These meetings will be held before the end of August. To the extent possible NPA should also submit any budget revisions for approval prior to this meeting.

Any other business

CLOSING

End of report.