



The Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast

Conference on: “Seeking Better Civic Advocacy in Mine Action”

19 May 2016
Matrouh City

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

Civic society plays a major role in providing support to the Egyptian Government when it comes to the pressing social problems that affect citizens' security and safety. The problem of landmines & Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) is considered one of these major issues in the North West Coast. They kill or maim anyone who encounters them, making it a serious threat to the society and an obstacle to its growth. The role of the community to come together, not only to provide support and assistance to mine victims, but also to protect the whole society through participating in the different mine action activities and supporting the efforts of the official government entities in dealing with landmines and ERWs and their dangers.

On this end, the Executive Secretariat, funded by the European Union (EU), held a conference to discuss the role of the civil society in mine action and how the Executive Secretariat can contribute to this role. On the margins of this conference, the Executive Secretariat exhibited the achievements of Mine Risk Education (MRE) campaign and honored the partners in the implementation of the campaign. The objectives of the conference were:

- Defining the functions & activities of the Executive Secretariat
- Reviewing the results of the MRE campaign.
- A Roundtable Discussion about the role of civil society in mine action.
- A Roundtable Discussion on the Executive Secretariat's role in promoting the role of the civil society.
- Honoring the Executive Secretariat's partners in the MRE Campaign.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference was conducted over a time span of one day. The event was three-fold, the first part was a plenary discussion session for the participants to pose their questions to the Executive Secretariat about its activities. The second part was an open dialogue about and achievements of the Executive Secretariat



thus far and the continuing needs of the mine victims and methods of meeting them. In the final part the activities of the MRE Campaign were exhibited and closing ceremony took place where the implementation partners were honored. The conference hosted 43 participants including the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education in Matrouh, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in Matrouh, the Director of the Ambulance Facility in Matrouh and the Managing Director of Endowments in Matrouh and representatives of the civil society in Matrouh including the medical syndicate, the pharmacists syndicate, writers, poets, intellectuals, as well as head of NGOs working in the field of mine action, a number of mine victims, and media personnel.

The First Section

The day began with opening remarks provided by the Executive Secretariat's director emphasizing the significant role of the civil society, and in the mine action activities in specific. He explained the recent change in management of the Executive Secretariat and conveyed the strategy of the Executive Secretariat within the Ministry of International Relations and the Minister's support to the project especially after her Excellency's visit to El-Alamein and her willingness to continue supporting the project and ensure the completion of its activities and future goals.

The participants were then asked to introduce themselves and elaborate on what the word "landmines" or "ERWs" symbolized to each of them and why. This exercise helped in commencing the discussion and encouraging participants to share their thoughts and concerns on the matter and their aspiration to end the mine problem in the North West Coast.

The Second Section

The second part of the event included an open dialogue on the achievements of the Executive Secretariat on the different domain of the mine action pillars; demining, development, Mine Risk Education (MRE), Victim Assistance (VA) and advocacy. The way forward and what is needed to be done was also discussed. The participants from the mine victims raised a number of issues related to the compensation and their need for further support on finding jobs and a constant stable income.

The Third Section

The final part of the conference included the closing ceremony of the MRE campaign, this entailed a demonstration of the MRE campaign activities in schools, university colleges, villages, healthcare units, mosques and different religious entities, NGOs, culture and literature centers, and soldiers and officers of the civil protection department. Thus among the distinguished guests were the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education in Matrouh, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in Matrouh, the Director of the Ambulance Facility in Matrouh and the Managing Director of Endowments in Matrouh who were honored for their assistance and partnership to complete the activities of the campaign. Potential protocols and further collaborations were also discussed to ensure the way-forward and build on previous achievements.

Media personnel were also thanked for their continuous efforts in covering and spreading awareness on the mine problem in the NWC and conveying comprehensive messages about the issue to the wide range of audiences.



ON THE MARGINS OF THE CONFERENCE

As a result of the gathering in the conference, a meeting was held later on the same day between the Executive Secretariat's Director, the MRE Officer and the head of the Literacy Directorate, the Head of Nile Media Center and the Head of the Educational Academy in Matrouh. The aim of the meeting was to initiate a collaboration between the four entities, this collaboration will aim at launching campaigns against landmines and ERWs, illiteracy and water scarcity.

The head of the Educational Academy also raised her willingness to collaborate in upgrading and redesigning the current MRE curriculum to further enhance it and increase its suitability for school pupils of different educational levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONFERENCE

1. The medical syndicate raised its willingness to provide medical care, free of charge, to mine victims.
2. The pharmacists syndicate raised its willingness to provide discounted medication through a membership card to mine victims.
3. The former head of the Matrouh's cultural center raised his willingness to collaborate in producing MRE material.
4. Formulating a new law for mine victims in specific, this will require raising the issue through Matrouh's members of parliament.
5. Assisting the mine victims in attaining jobs outside the 5% available for special needs in labour law.
6. The provision of a stable income to mine victims.
7. Assisting mine victims in producing their official papers to be able to get benefits.
8. Seeking the assistance of writers, intellectuals and scientists...etc. in Matrouh to carry out Executive Secretariat's activities in general, and to also produce MRE material suitable for Matrouh's audience and environment.
9. The need to finalize the Artificial Limbs center for the benefit of mine victims.
10. The need to engage further mine victims in similar events.
11. Providing a mechanism by which donations and charity could be offered to mine victims.



PARTICIPANTS LIST

No.	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Dr. Mohamed El Sharkasy	Undersecretary	Ministry of Education
2	El Sayed Gomaa	Undersecretary	Agriculture Directorate
3	Essam Ismail	Undersecretary	Ministry of Social Solidarity
4	Abdel Hameed Amer	Managing director	Local Radio Broadcast
5	Shiekh Ibrahim Shehata	Managing Director	Endowments Directorat in Matrouh
6	Dr. Mohamed Ahmed Shaaban	Director	Ambulance Facility in Matrouh
7	Hamad Khalid Shoaib	CEO	Emaar Masr
8	Suliman Masbaa Abou Zerby	Pharmacist	Pharmacist Syndicate in Matrouh
9	Abdullah Mohamed Hussien	Accountant	Misr Bank
10	Saad Yousef Hammouda	Agriculture Engineer	Agriculture Directorate
11	Mohamed Hamed	Anchor	Matrouh Radio Broadcast
12	Islam El Emam	Anchor	Matrouh Radio Broadcast
13	Atef Elmagawy	Deputy Director	El Ahram News
14	Dr. Hamdy El Araby	Firefighting Officer	Firefighting Department
15	Mona Abdel Mohsen Hassan	Head	Educational Academy
16	Abdullah Abdullah Saleh	Head	Mine Victims Association
17	Amoul Ezz Saleh	Head	Matrouh Media Center
18	Ayman Mohamed Yaquob	Head Associations Department	Matrouh Locality
19	Mohamed Refaay Aboul Dahab	Head of Agriculture Audit	Agriculture Directorate
20	Abdullah Omar Abdel Aal	Head of Committee Board	Survivors of Mines Association
21	Abdul Gawad Ahmed Fouda	Head of Compensation Department	Social Affairs Directorate
22	Gamal AbdelRahman Tafeek	Head of Department	Social Affairs Directorate
23	Reda El Sayed Badr Attallah	Head of El Qasr Village	Marsa Matrouh
24	Dr. Mohamed Aly Metwaly	Head of Emergency	Health Directorate
25	Abou Shady Ismail	Head of Youth Department	Youth and Sports Directorate
26	Mona Abdel Wahab	Journalist	Rosal-Yousif
27	Mohamed Refaat Shahat	Journalist	El Watan News
28	Aly El Shooky	Journalist	Misr El Youm News
29	Mahmoud Sadeq	Journalist	El Gomhouria News
30	Saleh Fat-Hallah	Journalist	El Esboo News
31	Ahmed Maghazy	Journalist	El Shorook News
32	Medhat Nassar	Journalist	El Akhbar News



33	Mohamed Nagat	Journalist	El Watan News
34	Hassan Mashaly	Journalist	El Youm El Sabee
35	Fadl Allah El Ameen	Mine Victim	
36	Mesbah Abdel Wareth	Mine Victim	
37	Farahat Abdel Atty Salam	Mine Victim	
38	Ragab Saeed Eisa	Mine Victim	
39	Mamdouh Salem	Mine Victim	
40	Mohamed Mahmoud Sabry	Officer	National Committee for Disabilities
41	Tamer Selim	Officer	Ambulance Directorate
42	Hany Mahran	Officer	Ambulance Directorate
43	Waleed Elewa	Public Relations Officer	Matrouh Directorate