



AFRICA/SOMALIA - Risk of explosive devices scattered throughout the country continues to be high

Mogadishu (Agenzia Fides) - Thousands of land mines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO) scattered in different parts of Somalia during the last decades of conflict are creating a new source of threat to the security achieved by the country. According to experts, it lacks the appropriate equipment for the service of clearing weapons of war. The eastern border of Somalia-Ethiopia is among the most invaded by UXO, sown during the war in 1977. Also cities are infested involved in the latest clashes between government troops and rebel militia group of Al-Shabab. According to the Office of the United Nations that deals with anti-mine actions (UNMAS), a further threat comes from factories that keep accumulations of explosive, abandoned weapons, ammunition and explosive devices (IEDs). The UNMAS argues that most of the communities of southern and central Somalia are highly infested with explosive remnants of war (ERW) and in a few of these areas there is the expertise and support needed to deal with these threats. The central region of Galgadud, where there was one of the largest military installations in Somali, is full of ERW. The region borders with Ethiopia and serves as the basis for the Somali armed forces that have left explosives and weapons when the government collapsed. Even the central and southern regions of Bakool, Bay and Hiraan are invaded by landmines, in addition to the zone of Afgooye and parts of Mogadishu where, in addition to ERW, there are anti-landmines and anti-vehicle. In 2012, at least eight children died in an explosion in the town of Balad in Middle Shabelle Region. According to UNMAS, in 2011, landmines caused 4% of deaths and injuries in Somalia, while UXO 55%, 32% of other types of explosive devices unidentified Somalia signed in 2012, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on the Prohibition of personnel Anti Mine, that involves the destruction of the remnants of war within four years In the last five years over 21,461 UXO and landmines have been destroyed in Somalia. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 04/02/2013)