Mr. Coordinator,

Paragraph 10 of Article 3 of APIII indicates that all feasible precautions shall be taken to protect civilians from the effects of mines, booby-traps and other devices. The same paragraph also says that effective advance warning shall be given of any emplacement of mines, booby-traps and other devices which may affect the civilian population.

This provision clearly applies also to IEDs and it is a legal requirement. IED awareness campaigns could be part of broader mine/ERW risk education ones or not. This would depend on the specific environment and circumstances in the field.

IED awareness could also be linked to the provisions of Article 12, which refers to the protection of peacekeeping missions, humanitarian and fact-finding missions, ICRC missions and others by High Contracting Parties and parties in a conflict from the effects of minefields, mined areas, mines, booby-traps and other devices.

Mr. Coordinator,

The United Nations also provides IED awareness. (Given the time constraints, this morning, I will focus on three points). First, (and this one that may be of particular interest to those who are here in this room, and who carry a smartphone). To have access to an entire module on IED awareness, you may from your smartphone download the following application: “UNMAS Landmines and ERW Safety”. It is easily accessible, available in multiple languages (eight languages so far), and will help you further identify and understand threats associated with IEDs. (Again, from your smart phone application, search for “UNMAS Landmines and ERW Safety”).

Second, I should like to mention the UN pre-deployment IED awareness training, to which UNMAS also contributed. IED awareness to UN staff has to
meet the specific requirements of the target audience. A peacekeeper, for example, who has to operate in a daily high threat environment needs more in-depth awareness, including immediate action drills, than staff who is assigned to tasks in less dangerous environments. That is why several types of IED awareness courses have been developed to meet the individual and collective requirements.

Third, (and, in conclusion, Mr. Coordinator), to give an example from the field, allow me to mention that the UNMAS programme in Mali is currently providing MINUSMA staff with tailored IED awareness training. In addition, due to the increase of the number of civilian casualties related to IEDs in Mali, UNMAS is working on the integration of IED awareness in its campaigns for civilian populations.

I thank you.