

Remarks by

**Nicholas Van Elsacker, Officer, Counter Improvised Explosive Device,
UN Mine Action Service - Somalia**

Good Morning,

My name is Nicholas Van Elsacker, I am the Counter Improvised Explosive Device Officer for the UN Mine Action Service - Somalia, responsible for providing explosives and safety training to United Nations and African Union personnel.

On behalf of UNMAS I wish to first thank the African Union for inviting me to speak at this important opening of the first AU funded EOD training. This training initiative between the AU and the International Peace Support Training Center, with technical support from UNMAS is a landmark in the AU's commitment to support its member states and address the threat from landmines, UXOs and IEDs on the African continent. Both UNMAS and the UN Office to the African Union (UNOAU) are committed to continue to develop their cooperation with the African Union and its member states in their noble fight against the many threats caused by Explosive Remnants of War.

It is very encouraging to see the number of students and the number of Member States that you represent as this shows a clear commitment from your respective Governments in the joint fight to rid Africa of Explosive Remnants of War.

You are very fortunate to have been selected to undergo training at the International Peace Support Training Centre's Humanitarian Peace Support School as it is recognised as one of Africa's centers of excellence for providing training compliant with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). This school has a long experience of conducting training for vital Peace Keeping and Humanitarian operations. This training will prove invaluable for your future work, and your fight against Landmines, UXO and IEDs.

In closing I would I would advise you to work hard to get the most from the training so you can gain the maximum benefit from you time here at the Humanitarian Peace Support School, thank you and welcome.