

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY COLOMBIA

I. Progress in implementation

1. Colombia reported that it released 136 areas in 2017, 75 areas were cancelled and 61 areas cleared. Addressing 1,941,671 square metres, including 208,866 square meters cancelled, 283,046 square meters reduced, 259,783 square metres cleared and 1,188,976 square meters addressed through “information collection” in 17 departments of the country. In the process Colombia destroyed 140 anti-personnel mines and 47 items of UXO. Colombia reported that humanitarian demining activities have taken place in 80 municipalities with 783 non-technical survey, 67 technical surveys, and 65 clearance operations having taken place.
2. The Committee observed that, as Colombia obtains more clarity regarding its remaining challenge, and is able to develop more specific work plans; greater measurability of progress in implementation is possible. The Committee observed that progress in implementation could be more clearly presented if Colombia used terminology contained within, and in a manner consistent with the IMAS.
3. The Committee observed that Colombia could provide increased clarity by employing the Guide to Reporting adopted by the Fourteenth Meeting of States parties.

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge

4. The Committee concluded that Colombia has provided some clarity regarding its remaining challenge by providing a summary table listing the number of events for each Colombian department.
5. Colombia reported an estimated 46,024,965 square metres of suspected contamination remaining. Colombia also reported that in 2017 a total of 121 “dangerous areas” measuring 630,657 square meters and 116 “confirmed dangerous areas” measuring 617,657 square meters were identified through survey activities.
6. The Committee observed that with survey activities ongoing the remaining challenge would be further clarified and that Colombia should present more precise information on the number of areas and size of these areas required to be addressed.

III. National plans for clearance and survey

7. Colombia reported that for 2018 it is projected that a total of 151 municipalities will have mine action interventions with a total of 1,445,971 square meters to be released. The Committee observed that it would welcome additional information on the efforts that will be carried out in these municipalities as well as a timelines for these activities. The Committee further observed that continued updates on its plan as Colombia gains clarity of its Article 5 challenge would be welcome.

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation

8. Colombia reported in its 2014 National Demining Plan that it undertakes activities in accordance with the IMAS and that Colombia makes use of, in a linear manner, non-technical survey, technical survey and clearance.

V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them

9. The Committee recalled that the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties (10MSP) had requested that Colombia provide updates with respect to a variety of commitments made and milestones contained in its extension request. The Committee recalled that the 10MSP had requested that Colombia submit to the 2013 Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties a revised implementation plan that contains and takes into account a clearer and more substantiated understanding of the location and nature of contamination and that includes revised annual projections of which areas would be addressed when and how. The Committee observed that Colombia was acting upon the decisions of the 10MSP by providing an updated plan to the 2014 Third Review Conference and keeping the States Parties informed on progress in implementation.

VI. Mine risk reduction

10. The Committee observed that Colombia had provided information on efforts to carry out MRE including through projects for MRE in emergency situation, through the integration of MRE in the education system, MRE projects as a part of demining projects and traditional MRE through the community. Colombia reported that a total of 62,805 people benefited from mine risk education activities.

11. The Committee noted the actions taken by Colombia in Mine Risk Education and noted these activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, coherent with applicable national and international standards, and tailored to the needs of mine-affected communities and integrated into ongoing mine action activities, namely data gathering, clearance and victim assistance as appropriate.