

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY IRAQ

I. Progress in implementation

1. Iraq reported that, in 2017, DMA released 241 mined areas, addressing 29,945,799 square metres, including 15,097 square metres of clearance in areas contaminated by anti-personnel mines, 23,147,092 square metres in areas affected by anti-tank mines, and 6,783,610 square metres of areas reported to be mixed contamination. DMA reported that through these efforts a total of 19, 823 explosive devices were destroyed.
2. Iraq reported that, in 2017, IKMAA released a total of 2,597,680 square metres. This includes 546,013 square metres reduced, and 2,051,667 square metres cleared. IKMAA also reported cancellation of an additional 5.2 square kilometres through non-technical survey.
3. The Committee observed that the information shared by Iraq could be further clarified by using terminology consistent with the IMAS. The Committee further observed that progress in implementation could be more clearly presented if all States implementing Article 5 obligations used terminology contained within, and in a manner consistent with, the IMAS. The Committee noted the importance of Iraq continuing to provide information on progress made disaggregated according to areas released through clearance, reduction or cancellation.
4. The Committee observed that Iraq could provide increased clarity by employing the Guide to Reporting adopted by the Fourteenth Meeting of States parties.

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge

5. The Committee observed that Iraq provided clarity regarding its remaining challenge by providing a list of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, and including in this list the estimated size of each area, the types and quantity, when known, of anti-personnel mines in each area, and information on the geographic location of each area.
6. DMA reported 283 suspect hazardous areas in four governorates including three governorates bordering Iran measuring 1,071,931,305 square metres remain to be addressed. DMA reported a further six mined areas in two Governorates, Basra and Maysan measuring 26,855,456 square metres and 47 suspect hazardous areas in six governorates Basra, Diyala, Maysan, Niniveh, Salah al Din and Dhi qar, measuring 17,387,079 square metres remain to be addressed.
7. IKMAA reported 2,943 mined areas measuring 171,458,064 square metres remaining to be addressed.
8. The Committee observed that, with survey activities ongoing, Iraq had provided precise information, to the extent possible, on the number and size of areas required to be addressed in the context of Article 5 obligations.

III. National plans for clearance and survey

9. The Committee observed that Iraq had provided a work plan annexed to its transparency report indicating areas in which it would undertake clearance and survey, indicating what geographical and quantified results are expected when, how and by whom.

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation

10. The Committee noted that Iraq has reported applying current land release standards to further enhance efficient and expedient implementation.

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

11. The Committee observed that Iraq had provided updates with respect to a variety of commitments made and milestones contained in its 2017 extension request granted at the 16MSP. The Committee further noted that Iraq had provided a plan for non-technical survey operations in the different areas of the country including NTS plans for areas liberated from ISIS.

V. Mine risk reduction

12. Iraq reported in detail on the actions it has taken to effectively exclude the population from areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, including through mine risk education programs and trainings with international and national organisations. Iraq reported a total of 677 MRE activities benefiting 130,325 beneficiaries for the reporting period by IKMAA and 407 MRE activities for DMA. The Committee noted the actions taken by the DMA and IKMAA in Mine Risk Education and welcomes further information on its efforts to ensure that these activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, coherent with applicable national and international standards, tailored to the needs of mine-affected communities and integrated into ongoing mine action activities, namely data gathering, clearance and victim assistance as appropriate.