

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY SUDAN

I. Progress in implementation

1. Sudan reported that in 2017 it addressed 26 areas measuring 1,041,760 square metres known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, including 74,875 square metres cancelled, 259,551 square metres reduced and 707,334 square metres addressed through clearance, destroying 144 anti-personnel mines, 59 antitank mines and 98,885 items of unexploded ordnance.
2. The Committee noted that the information provided by Sudan on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2013 extension request.
3. The Committee further observed that while this information was disaggregated in a manner consistent with previous recommendations endorsed by the States Parties, minor discrepancies were present. The Committee noted a minor discrepancy between Sudan addressing 1,041,760 square metres as given in 2. Status of programs for destruction of APMs in mined areas, (Article 5) and 795,645 square metres as recorded in Annex II: Areas Released, 1 January 2017-31 December 2017. The Committee noted that clarifications with respect to a minor discrepancy between the reporting of 144 Anti-personnel mines destroyed as given in 2. Status of programs for destruction of APMs in mined areas, (Article 5), and 30 anti-personnel mines destroyed as recorded in Annex II: Areas Released, 1 January 2017-31 December 2017, would also be welcome.
4. The Committee welcomed Sudan employing the Guide to Reporting adopted by the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties (14MSP) in reporting on progress in implementation.

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge

5. The Committee observed that Sudan had provided a high degree of clarity regarding its remaining challenge by providing a list of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, including the estimated size of each area, and information on the geographic location of each area. Sudan reported a remaining challenge at the end of 2017 of 18,733,895 square metres. This included, 52 areas known to contain anti-personnel mines totalling 2,402,260 square metres and 42 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines totalling 16,331,635 square metres remaining to be addressed.
6. The Committee noted that while the number of areas to be addressed had decreased from the number Sudan reported previously, from 99 to 94. Sudan had reported addressing 26 areas during 2017. The Committee observed that, with survey activities ongoing, Sudan's remaining challenge could be further clarified by presenting more precise information on the number of areas and size of these areas identified as a result of ongoing re-survey efforts.

III. National plans for clearance and survey

7. The Committee noted that Sudan submitted a request for extension in 2018 for consideration by the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties. The Committee noted that the request for extension included an updated work plan for completion with a revised number of areas per state that it intends to address during the period. This includes; 80 suspect hazardous areas measuring 3.8 square kilometres and 3 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 4.2 square kilometres in 2017-2018; 54 suspect hazardous areas measuring 10.2 square kilometres and 3 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 13.2 square kilometres in 2018-2019; 16 suspect hazardous areas measuring 5 square kilometres square metres and 2 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 5.4 square kilometres in 2019-2020.

8. The Committee observed that Sudan's work plan included a sharp increase in the amount of area to be addressed in the period 2018-2019. The Committee noted that it would welcome updates from Sudan on reasons for the sharp increase, and efforts to increase capacity to meet this increase. The Committee further observed national plans for survey and clearance could be more clearly presented if Sudan used terminology contained within, and in a manner consistent with the IMAS.
9. Sudan reported that insecurity in parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile States has impacted the efforts of Sudan to meet its Article 5 Commitments by its 1 April 2019 deadline. Sudan reported that its work plan is based on the assumptions that there will be an improvement in the security situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States. Sudan reported that the other factors that may hamper the implementation includes, conflict, frequent movement of population, finding additional hazards, high metallic soils, and the rainy season. The Committee welcomes further information from Sudan on these matters.

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation

10. The Committee noted that Sudan had provided detailed notes on its land release process. The Committee further noted that Sudan is currently undertaking a review of its national technical standard guidelines. The Committee noted that information on Sudan's review of its national technical standards and guidelines would be welcome.

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

11. The Committee recalled that the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties (13MSP) had requested that Sudan provide updates with respect to a variety of commitments made and milestones contained in its extension request. The Committee noted that Sudan was acting upon the decisions of the 13MSP by providing specific updates on each of these matters. The Committee noted that Sudan has provided updates relative to annual milestones for progress as contained in Section 17 of its extension its extension request.
12. The Committee noted that Sudan has provided updates on outcomes of survey efforts and how additional clarity obtained has changed Sudan's understanding of the remaining implementation challenge, The Committee observed that the Eastern States of Sudan were accessible for demining operations, while access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile states was limited for clearance and survey operations due to insecurity. The Committee observed that Sudan had undertaken limited survey and clearance in the two States in support of humanitarian aid, surveying and clearing a total of 37,898 kilometres of road. The Committee would welcome updates on the results of survey and clearance activities and their impact on Sudan's implementation of its Article 5 obligations.
13. The Committee noted Sudan had provided an update on 'data clean-up' efforts, Sudan reported that it had aimed to complete data clean-up during 2017. The Committee observed that given the importance of accurate data to the status of operations, further information on Sudan's progress in this area would be welcome.
14. The Committee noted that Sudan provided updates regarding external financing received and resources made available by the Government of Sudan to support implementation; as well as Sudan's efforts to facilitate the operations of international demining organizations and to expand indigenous demining capacity, and the results of these efforts. Sudan reported that the Government of Sudan had contributed USD \$2,000,000 to support Sudan Mine Action Programmes during 2017. With additional funding of USD \$2,737,781 being mobilised through the Ordnance Disposal Office and UNMAS.

VI. Mine risk reduction

15. Sudan reported on the actions it has taken to effectively exclude the population from CHAs and SHAs, including through the marking of hazardous areas. The Committee noted that Sudan had been providing Mine Risk Education to local population groups in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, West Kordofan and Dafur States reaching 3,608,279 beneficiaries.
16. The Committee noted the actions taken by Sudan 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.