

**Notes for ICRC intervention on updates by States Parties that were granted an extension or still have obligations under article 5**

**Standing Committee on clearance**

**Wednesday, 22 June 2011**

Thank you Mr. Co-chair,

The ICRC would like to thank all States Parties that provided yesterday and today an update of their clearance progress. We would like to congratulate Nigeria for having announced on Monday that it has now fully complied with its Article 5 obligations. We commend Nigeria for having put clearance of its suspected areas as a priority and for pushing this project through successful completion.

We would like now to make a few remarks on States Parties that provided an update on their clearance progress since they were granted an extension request in 2008, 2009 or 2010. The ICRC was pleased with the level and the quality of reporting of many States Parties that chose to follow the questionnaire put to them by you Mr. Co-chairs.

We were equally pleased to hear from Jordan, Uganda, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Denmark and Venezuela that they are on track to meet their extended deadline in the coming years.

We listened with great attention to the update given by the United Kingdom on the clearance activities undertaken on the Falkland/Malvinas Islands. We are pleased to hear details of the second phase of the pilot project, which will consist in exploring land release methods in 2 suspected hazardous areas.

We are concerned however that there are 112 remaining suspected mined areas, covering around 7.5 km square and that by early next year, 7 years only will be remaining for the UK to complete its article 5 obligations. 2019 might seem very far away but States parties to this convention have undertaken to clear their suspected mined areas as soon as possible and to put plans in place to do so at the earliest possible opportunity.

We note with deep regret that the UK is not yet in a position to provide a detailed demining plan for these areas. The decision taken at the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of States parties noted that ‘the UK agreed to provide as soon as possible but not later than 30 June 2010 a detailed explanation of how demining is proceeding and the implications for future demining in order to meet the UK’s obligations in accordance with Article 5.4b) and c) of the Convention’. We really hope that the UK will be in a position at the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to provide detailed demining plans, in conformity with the decision of States Parties at the 9<sup>th</sup> MSP.

Let me now turn to a few remarks concerning the updates given by States which have clearance deadline in 2013 and later.

We are pleased to hear of the good progress made by Cyprus, Burundi and Bhutan. We congratulate them for their efforts and the statement that they are likely to complete their article 5 obligations on time. We welcome the clarifications from Gambia that they do not believe to have any more suspected mined areas under their jurisdiction.

We notice however a sharp contrast in the quality and details of reporting between the States that have been granted extension requests and those with an upcoming deadline. The updates provided by a great number of States Parties in the process of implementing their original article 5 deadline lack clarity about the exact amount of the work done so far, the extent of the remaining work and the precise plans that are put in place to achieve this deadline.

Asking for an extension of its original deadline is becoming a routine. The ICRC is very worried about this trend and the high number of extension requests filed.

Finally, we hope that Ethiopia, Yemen and Eritrea will be present at our next meeting of States Parties and be in a position to provide detailed reporting on their progress, and on its extension request for Eritrea.