



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Intersessional Meeting of the Standing Committees of the  
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production  
and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Statements held by**

**Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and  
Mine Action Technologies – Updates by State Parties that have  
submitted requests in 2011**

**Geneva, 20 – 22 June 2011**

*Check against delivery*

Mr. Co-chair

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on the agenda items under consideration.

My delegation would also like to thank the States Parties with Art. 5 extension requests for their updates on the current status of implementation. Switzerland is aware of the difficulties State Parties are facing in fulfilling the obligations of the Convention.

The extension requests certainly take up some of the lessons that we have derived in this respective context so far. We particularly welcome the approach chosen in some cases to apply for intermediate extensions as a first step, in order to gain more clarity on the remaining challenge. Similarly, we welcome the efforts undertaken to provide clear data on contamination, on clearance achievements and on remaining challenges in circumstances that are sometimes difficult. We particularly welcome the fact that some States show a high level of national ownership. We also appreciate that numerous references to the important role of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) are made by states implementing article 5.

Mr. Co-chair, *third*

this is the fourth year that this Convention is facing extension requests from States who are not able to fulfil their clearance obligations within the ten- year deadline set by this Convention.

Our delegation cannot but state that our experiences made so far have been rather mixed:

- The number of requests, in our view, is too high: It is important to stress once again that an extension of the clearance deadline should only be requested in exceptional cases.
- Some requests are based on insufficient data. We would like to take this opportunity to remind States that the Cartagena Action plan calls upon State Parties with Article 5 obligations to ensure full transparency and to provide all relevant information on progress, as well as on steps taken aiming at completion.
- It is striking that in some cases precise information was only provided after the ten-year deadline had passed. Concise information on the tasks and responsibilities of the national authorities, as well as on their co-operation and co-ordination with international actors are key elements for an extension request. Equally important are intermediary quantitative and qualitative benchmarks including timelines for progress.
- The deadlines requested are often too long. Only the minimum of time necessary for completion should be requested. "As soon as possible" remains the goal.
- if a request is necessary, we would call upon the state parties to consider it an opportunity for the requesting state as well as for the convention: a carefully elaborated extension request should be exploited as a chance to better understand the problem

and to move forward with new dynamics, including the possibility to attract new donor commitment.

- States parties mandated to analyse the requests have often not sufficient knowledge or resources to carefully analyse the requests. Let me clearly stress, however, that there is no doubt that the support from the ISU as well as from civil society – namely ICBL and ICRC – is excellent. Our delegation is grateful for this expert advice. However, we have to reflect how we can enable the necessary in-depth analysis and discussion of the requests here in Geneva, in order to ensure that high quality requests continue to be the norm. The workshop organised by the ISU for the members of the analysis group this spring was a very good start in this regard and we thank the ISU for this very appropriate and necessary initiative.

On 18 March this year, the Co-Chairs of this Committee, Colombia and Switzerland, organised with the precious help of the ISU, a workshop particularly for national directors of mine action programmes. It was based on the intention to provide a framework for an exchange of experiences with extension requests among affected countries. Indeed, the individual contributions showed how complex the task of a timely implementation is. However, it also showed how important clarity on the remaining challenges and national ownership by the affected State are. We hope that the current as well as future extension requests can even more profit from the accumulated number of lessons learned so far.

Thank you, Mr. Co-chair.





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Intersessional Meeting of the Standing Committees of the  
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production  
and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Statements held by**

**Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and  
Mine Action Technologies – Updates by State Parties that were  
granted extensions on deadlines for implementing Article 5 / that  
are in the process of implementing Article 5**

**Geneva, 20 – 22 June 2011**

*Check against delivery*

Mr. Co-Chair

My delegation thanks you for giving us the floor. We also thank all the state parties, which have provided us with detailed updates on the progress achieved regarding article 5 implementation. We would like to share with you some general observations.

First however, Switzerland would like to commend Nigeria on the announcement of completion of the obligations under article 5 of the convention. We are looking forward to receive the completion report and thank Nigeria for all its efforts in this matter.

At the same time, we are calling upon all State Parties, which have still to complete clearance obligations to refer to the example of Nigeria. As Co-chairs of the Standing Committee together with Colombia we believe that the frank and open exchange between formerly affected State Parties and State Parties with ongoing clearance obligations can be an important tool to advance the implementation of the Convention. Colombia and Switzerland have identified the promotion of south-south co-operation as a priority during their co-chairing of this standing committee, and we have emphasised south south co-operation for example during the workshop referred to by the Co-chairs yesterday. The discussions among participants of the workshop have demonstrated that such exchanges can be highly valuable for the implementation of the convention. We would therefore encourage such an exchange between Nigeria and affected states. We thank Nigeria for its readiness to share experiences and best practices. We congratulate Nigeria once more for the important achievement for Nigeria and for the Convention.

Let's turn to remaining challenges, which are in the responsibility of us all:

Firstly, we recall that the credibility of the convention to a great extent depends on the fulfilment and completion of the article 5 obligations within the given time frames. Remaining article 5 obligations have not only an important impact on the way this convention is implemented, but it has also – and let's not forget this crucial point – a direct impact on affected peoples lives.

Secondly, my delegation would like to highlight and share with you some lessons learned Switzerland has identified:

- State parties should spare no effort to identify as soon as possible all areas under their jurisdiction or control, in which AP mines are suspected or known to be placed. **We are still faced with too many state parties who do not understand the true extent of their article 5 problem;**
- We would like to highlight as a donor state that the **presentation of detailed and precise information on progress made, remaining challenges and specific milestones in regard to clearance are crucial.**

- In our view, one aspect to be highlighted refers to the importance of **surveys** used to assess the contamination and impact of areas with mines and ERW: the results of surveys mostly decide over the following allocation of resources for clearance programmes. Therefore the quality of repeated surveys is of outmost importance.
- State parties not affected bear additional responsibilities: although resources are scarce everywhere, support and assistance is needed more than ever before. **The efficient and effective use of international assistance has to be coupled with increased national ownership and co-ordination between national and international stakeholder allow for maximum impact.**
- Ensuring **financial predictability** for clearance programmes becomes ever more challenging. We hope that we will be able to discuss this issue in more detail and in a result-oriented manner in the standing committee on co-operation, assistance and resources.

My delegation is of the view that the aforementioned aspects also refer in many ways to the challenges described in the updates presented yesterday and today. We are therefore looking forward to further exchanges and feedbacks in order to keep the process of clearance dynamic in order to reach our ultimate goal, a world free of anti-personnel mines.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair