

**ICBL Statement on updates by States Parties that have completed implementation  
of Article 5 since the 11MSP  
MBT Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings  
Delivered by Norwegian People's Aid on behalf of the ICBL  
21 May 2012**



Co-Chair,

NPA would like to congratulate Jordan and Guinea Bissau for their accomplishments and commend the national authorities for their steady leadership and solid coordination.

As a clearance operator working in both countries we would like to take this opportunity to share some of our lessons learnt from the operator's perspective.

Guinea-Bissau and Jordan faced very different forms of contamination and NPA's approach was therefore different in each case, tailored to the specific needs of the country. Nevertheless NPA's aim was the same: assisting both states to meet their Article 5 obligations as quickly, efficiently, and effectively as possible.

In Jordan, the mine problem was extensive, being spread in minefields along the borders with Israel and Syria. Upon request from the Jordanian government, NPA removed and destroyed more than 172,000 mines and released more than 17 million square meters of land, since 2006. The clearance was executed through an integrated capacity involving non-technical survey, technical survey, manual deminers, mine detection dogs, and mechanical assets. Even though mine maps were available in Jordan, it was essential, especially because of the specific conditions which included the shifting of mines due to soil composition and deliberate displacement of mines by traffickers, that NPA applied land release methods in its clearance efforts. This ensured that the land was cleared and released in the most effective way possible. Additionally, the key to the very successful implementation was the excellent partnership that NPA has had with the NCDR.

As Jordan reported earlier, NPA is remaining in Jordan for another year to conduct survey and verification along the Syrian border, the outcome of which should be included in Jordan's future reporting. With reduced resources needed, equipment and trained personnel is now available to respond as necessary in the clearing of the aftermath of the Syrian crisis or can be given at disposal to other NPA programs in the region. This very same approach, of moving assets and human resources across borders, was used in NPA's intervention operation in Guinea-Bissau and is an example of real and effective south-south cooperation.

Upon request by Guinea-Bissau's National Mine Action Coordination Centre and UNDP, NPA conducted a nationwide landmine and explosive remnants of war survey in Guinea-Bissau from September 2010 to June 2011 as part of the UNDP completion initiative. NPA's operations in Guinea-Bissau were executed by one all-African team, comprised of former NPA staff from Mozambique, headed by an Angolan program manager. The same team previously helped Malawi and Zambia successfully complete their Article 5 obligations. Through a comprehensive land release approach, the team moved from district, to community, to village, resurveying the country, clearly defining the mine problem, allowing for mine clearance efforts to take place where there was real contamination, and not to waste time on expensive clearance efforts where no threat was found. The survey ultimately identified 17 hazardous areas to be cleared, 11 containing mines and seven containing ERW. Mine clearance was completed by October 2011 and the remaining ERW areas were cleared by March 2012.

The use of existing resources and experienced staff in Africa made the Guinea-Bissau operation extremely cost-efficient as it came with almost no investment cost, neither in terms of capital investment

or investment in training and with minimal transaction costs. Such an intervention was also possible due to the flexibility of the multi-year frame-agreement that NPA has with the Norwegian MFA.

Both these examples prove that the completion of clearance obligations is feasible, as long as the solutions are tailored to the specific needs and as long as there is willingness and commitment from all stakeholders involved, but most importantly the affected state. We hope that these two examples can serve as inspiration also to other affected states, ensuring that the job is done sooner rather than later.

Thank you.