

**ICBL Comments on States Parties that Have Received Extensions under Article 5  
MBT Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings  
Standing Committee on Mine Clearance  
22 – 23 May 2012**



The ICBL is pleased to learn about the good progress that has taken place in many countries, but it is disappointing that at least two States Parties may let their extended deadlines slip. While we appreciate states taking the time to do the job in a thorough and safe manner, we would encourage them to do a more realistic assessment earlier in the process to determine whether additional time would be needed. If necessary, states should ask for another extension, even if just for a few extra months.

**Uganda:** We have heard occasionally that there may be additional mined areas not covered by current demining efforts. So we would like to know if comprehensive survey efforts have been taken to ensure that there are not additional SHAs.

**Yemen:** It is a shame that Yemen is not here this week. In addition to learning about new laying of mines, we are also disturbed to learn that clearance has basically come to a stop. We would like to encourage those that have the opportunity to speak to Yemen on a bilateral basis to encourage them to conduct clearance on an urgent basis.

**Senegal:** We also regret the slow pace of demining progress, as Senegal itself expressed. We call on all actors, including the UNDP, to do everything possible to resolve the bureaucratic issues that prevent life-saving clearance. Since Senegal did not present a clear mine action plan with its extension request and considering the lack of progress to date, we encourage Senegal to submit a plan to the 12MSP showing how the remaining work will be finished by its new deadline.

**Mauritania:** It seems once again that Mauritania is releasing land ahead of its targets while receiving less money than planned. It sounds like Mauritania would have some good lessons to share on efficient use of funding!

**Peru:** It is good to hear about the completion of clearance around the high security prisons and other security installations and about efforts to increase productivity, but work on the border with Ecuador still seems to be going very slowly. What else can be done to increase the pace at the border? Are the police deminers now working on the border as planned?

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Some states have been saying that they are “committed” to meeting their new clearance deadline. We welcome such positive statements, but we would like to hear more about *concrete plans* to meet those deadlines.

In addition, we would like to point out that many States Parties were asked in the decision on their extension requests to submit updated clearance plans at a future point, and we have also encouraged many states to resubmit plans to better reflect the reality of achievements to date. Some states are now saying that they will provide such plans, like Chad, which plans to submit it to the 12MSP. We suggest that such plans are given in writing and not just referred to in statements.

**Ecuador:** We would like to know if Ecuador is still on track to meet its extended deadline. Specifically, we would like to know how it plans to address the additional contaminated land previously thought to be in Peruvian territory, which is not a large area in absolute terms, but represents a big increase relative to the existing contamination and clearance rates. In addition, we would like to know when it plans to finish the survey of a significant amount of land that could help reduce overall contamination estimates, or announce the results if it is already done.

**Mozambique:** What amount of the project financial resources needed will be financed by the government of Mozambique?

**Eritrea:** We understand that there is no more UNDP support for mine action. We encourage Eritrea to accept offers that have been made to provide international technical support. Did we understand correctly that 3.2km<sup>2</sup> were cleared in 2011, which would represent a 30 fold increase from 2010, or is this land released through other means? It is important for states to be clear about such reporting how land was released. We would also like to ask Eritrea to provide more information on ongoing survey since this was the main goal of the interim extension period.

**Thailand:** Has the National Mine Action Committee met to discuss the urgent need to provide necessary funds to TMAC? We appreciate the plans to increase productivity, but Thailand would need to release 80 km<sup>2</sup> a year to meet its deadline, which is ten times more than it has achieved to date. Given that Thailand is so far behind on implementing the plan it submitted with its extension request, we believe a new plan is needed to reflect the current situation. We encourage Thailand to submit such a plan to SPs in the near future. Finally, we are deeply concerned about continued casualties on the border with Cambodia. We hope the progress announced on collaboration with Cambodia will allow rapid clearance of such areas.

**Bosnia-Herzegovina:** This is another case of a country where land release is falling far behind annual projected rates. We therefore urge Bosnia to bring to the 12MSP the new strategic plan it will be developing this year.

**Chad:** We share Chad's frustrations with the delays in getting funding through intermediary organizations and urge such organizations to do all they can to ensure Chad is able to fulfill the plans it submitted with its extension request.

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We would like to thank those states that clearly presented progress relative to the planned targets they laid out in their extension requests; we encourage all states to do so in order for us to have a better view on where they stand vis-a-vis the commitments they made.

**United Kingdom:** The ICBL continues to be very disappointed with the progress made by the United Kingdom. We believe this shows a lack of commitment to meeting its Article 5 obligations. As the co-chairs reminded us, the UK was called on to annually review the time it would need to finish clearance and to go "much faster" than planned. But so far, progress has actually been much slower. The UK has actually cleared only one-tenth of the projected annual rate. And three years into its demining program, the UK should be far beyond the "very much pilot programmes" that the UK described today.

In addition, let's not overstate the achievements of this second pilot project, which was about releasing land that was essentially known not to contain AP mines. In terms of lessons learned from this recent

project, we were surprised to hear that they are only now considering a “hybrid approach” to address the remaining contamination. Isn’t this just another way of saying that they will use the full range of available land release techniques, as states have been doing for years and were encouraged to do by the Cartagena Action Plan?

Finally, we would like to strongly encourage the UK to develop the plan they were asked to be present by 30 June 2010, taking into account the call to proceed much faster than planned, and to submit the plan in writing to the 12MSP.

**Cambodia:** We have a few questions for clarification: You reported 1014km<sup>2</sup> of contaminated land so far identified through the BLS, but only 470km<sup>2</sup> that would be addressed by 2019. Does that mean Cambodia won’t be able to finish by the new deadline? Today you reported 142.8km<sup>2</sup> released through clearance and technical survey, but the Monitor received a report on a considerably smaller amount. Was this all land with AP mine contamination? Was the work done by military deminers all done by accredited units?

In terms of clearance along the border with Thailand, there seemed to be a contradiction between what Thailand reported on the possibility for collaboration between the two mine action centers and what Cambodia reported. Can you please clarify what has been agreed? On the prioritization issue, we understand that access to some areas on the K5 mine belt is still being denied where there are high density of mines and ongoing accidents. We agree with the ICRC that delays in clearing such areas could be seen as use, and we would again like to stress the need to clear these areas in the briefest possible delay.

**Chile:** Were the figures provided in the report today and in Chile’s Article 7 report the cumulative amount of land released or just for the past year? It would be useful to have both numbers, plus a clear statement of the remaining estimated contamination.

**Tajikistan:** We would like to know how specifically is Tajikistan planning to proceed much faster than the extension period granted, as called upon by States Parties. We also would like to know why it is not conducting technical survey on the border with Uzbekistan when we understand that Uzbekistan claims to have already cleared these areas.

**Colombia:** We were very pleased to hear about the decision to accredit civilian deminers. When do you expect that they will be able to begin clearance? We understand that funding has been withdrawn recently, in part due to the Attorney General’s report. What are the possibilities now to renew such funding?