

**Notes for ICRC intervention to the
Standing Committee on Mine Clearance
under the agenda item**

"Updates from relevant States Parties on the Status of Implementation"

Thursday 5 June 2008

Let me begin by thanking all States Parties that have taken the floor today that is almost all of those that have mine clearance deadlines from 2009 to 2015 to provide updates and their progress and plans.

We would like to congratulate Malawi and France for having announced that they have now fully complied with their article 5 obligations. In this respect, we would like to express our appreciation to France for having used the declaration of completion template which was adopted at the 7th meeting of States Parties for declaring fulfilment of their article 5 obligations.

We would also like to commend Albania, Tunisia, Burundi, Greece and Serbia for the efforts they have shown in the implementation of their article 5 obligations and for confirming today the excellent news that they will complete the clearance of all mined areas before or by their deadlines.

Even if we heard a number of good news today, Mr. Co-chair, we also wish to express here a few observations and concerns.

We note with concern that, while all States which have taken the floor have reported on past progress, many, and in particular some States which have a deadline in 2010, 2011 and 2012 have not indicated clearly the extent of the work which remains to be done and the detailed plans of how they will achieve full mine clearance before the end of their deadline.

Secondly, we find most worrying that a number of States have not yet, for some of them 6 or 7 years after the entry into force for these states, identified the extent of mined areas in their country, have not carried out a specific survey or are not yet in possession of survey results.

Thirdly, we would urge all States Parties that still have deadlines under article 5 of the Convention to take advantage of the work done by the analysing group and to look at the way some countries have presented their extension requests and their future demining plans. In particular, we would like to draw the attention of States Parties to the requests of Jordan and Croatia as well as to the analysing group extension request checklist.

While Tajikistan, Rwanda, Chile or Sudan today followed the questionnaire put forward by the Co-chairs, many States did not clearly explain or share with us very important factors which enable us to fully grasp the extent of contamination in each country and the progress made, such as the total land requiring clearance at the entry into force (in m² or km², and not just total number of minefields or in the number of mines laid, we would submit that the number of mines or of minefields does not allow us to understand the extent of the contamination), the estimated land remaining to be cleared as of June 2008, the annual projections of mined areas to be released in the years to come, the circumstances which might impede the ability of the State Party to fulfil its plans, the methods to be used to clear contaminated land as well as financial and international resources available to carry out their plans.

We hope that more States Parties will detail in the future their demining plans with yearly objectives and will make greater use of their Co-chairs questionnaire.