

Eritrea statement for the (Article 5) Mine Clearance Obligations

On the 21 – 25 June 2010 standing committee meeting

1. Eritrea has been the setting for many major armed conflicts which have left a massive legacy of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of war (ERW) making the country one of the world most affected.
2. A National Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted and completed in June 2004. The LIS conclusively identified and indicated that out of Eritrea's 4,176 communities, 481 are affected by landmines and UXO impacting 655,000 people and identified over 5,000 Land mines and UXO victims. Such information is detailed in the National Survey of people with disabilities prepared by the Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare. The LIS reported that the nationwide mine impact suspected hazardous areas represented approximately 129 square kilometers.
3. To date a total of 54 square kilometers has been cleared, out of which 22 square kilometers has been cleared following the completion of the LIS. These efforts have culminated in the destruction of 10,258 Anti-personnel mines, 997 Anti-tank mines, and 68,890 UXO destroyed.
4. The remaining approximate 108 square kilometers requires technical survey to identify and reduce the area and subsequently carry out clearance.
5. It is also important to note that Eritrea has carried out extensive Mine Risk Education efforts in villages, hospitals, schools and using the occasions of national festivals and holydays. In addition MRE is broadcasted in all Eritrean ethnic languages in radio.
6. All these activities that have taken place have achieved the following goals:

insignificant compared to the remaining task of mine action. Unless significant external support is acquired, it will take much longer to complete the national mine clearing program than was planned initially.

Unfortunately and based on all the above mentioned reasons, the State of Eritrea will need to request for a 10 years' extension of the deadline to accomplish and ensure complete clearance and destruction of all landmines and UXOs in the country, according to Article 5 Paragraph 3 of the Convention. Eritrea is currently working with the Implementation Support Unit on this issue.

I thank you.