

Maximising the Potential of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies:

An Invitation to the Convention's Mine Affected States Parties

The 4MSP President's Action Programme stated that with respect to the objective of clearing mined land "we must work quickly to ensure that we know the extent of the problem, establish and support national mine action programs, develop national plans which take into account the Convention's 10-year time-frame, identify technical and financial needs and ensure that progress is effectively measured." This document went on to say that "by acting promptly we can ensure that this 10-year period will be well used, and that very few States Parties, if any, will need to request an extension of their period of obligation as prescribed in Article 5."

Undertaking the actions necessary to implement Article 5 is and will be a significant challenge for many States Parties. A total of 45 States Parties either have reported mined areas or have not yet done so but are assumed to be mine affected. **By the 2004 Review Conference, it will be important to know both the extent to which advances have been made in implementing Article 5 and the challenges that will remain in the period leading to the expiry of the Convention's deadlines for mine clearance in 2009.**

Therefore, mine affected States Parties are encouraged to use or continue to use every available means to communicate matters related to the "**4P approach**", that is:

- **Problems** related to mined areas and the humanitarian impact of these areas;
- **Plans** that have been developed to clear mined areas, including the extent to which mine action has been incorporated into broader national development and poverty reduction planning and strategies;
- **Progress** made in meeting the obligations of Article 5; and,
- **Priorities** for assistance to support the implementation of national mine clearance plans.

Annual Article 7 reports submitted by States Parties serve as an important formal means for mine affected States Parties to communicate information. To assist States Parties in maximising the potential of the reporting format as a tool to measure progress and communicate needs, the United Nations and the ICBL have developed a reporting template to improve and simplify reporting on matters related to mine clearance.

In addition to Article 7 reporting, the Intersessional Work Programme – as noted in the 4MSP President's Action Programme – serves as an important informal means for mine affected States Parties with an opportunity to share information. In this regard, the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies encourage all mine affected States Parties to maximise the potential provided by the remaining meetings of the Standing Committee prior to the 2004 Review Conference. In particular:

The Co-Chairs invite the mine affected States Parties to make use of the attached suggested framework for preparing updates to meetings of the Standing Committee.

Doing so in advance of the 2004 Review Conference would provide the States Parties with essential information needed to facilitate the Conference's tasks of reviewing the status and operation of the Convention and drawing any conclusions related to its implementation. In addition, this information will enable the States Parties to better assess the collective challenges that remain, especially with regard to meeting the first deadlines for mine clearance in 2009.

Suggested framework for preparing updates to meetings of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies

In order to assist mine affected States Parties in preparing written and oral presentations (maximum: 8 minutes) on the challenges they face and efforts that are being taken to overcome these challenges, the following framework has been developed. In addition to making a presentation in accordance with this framework, States Parties may wish to distribute more lengthy documents, such as national mine action plans.

I. Problems related to mined areas and the humanitarian impact of these areas

- In concrete terms, what is known – and not known – about the extent to which areas are mined and the impact of mined areas? What areas are affected? To what extent are communities and populations affected by mined areas? How many landmine casualties have there been in recent years?
- Of the affected areas, which are considered to be high, medium and low impact? What methodology was used to determine these priorities?
- If very little is known about the impact of mined areas, what steps are being taken or considered to obtain necessary information?

II. Plans to address the problem of mined areas

- Has a national mine action plan been established? What are the objectives of the plan and how do these objectives relate to the Convention's obligation to clear mined areas within a ten-year time-frame?
- To what extent has mine action been incorporated into national development and poverty reduction strategies? How are mine-affected communities' requests for clearance addressed?
- What is the use planned for mined land once it has been cleared?
- To what extent have domestic resources been applied to the problem of mined areas?
- Have organizational structures been developed to support mine action? What organizations and assets are being deployed and for which activities? How many individuals are involved in activities such as mine clearance, mine risk education, and coordination? What other core assets (e.g., mine detecting dogs, mechanical devices, etc.) are available?

III. Progress made in meeting the obligations of Article 5

- If a national mine action plan has been developed, does it note how progress in implementing the plan will be measured?
- On an annual basis, what area has been cleared and what area has been reduced (in square meters)? How many and what type of landmines and UXO have been cleared?
- To what extent have populations and communities directly and indirectly benefited from the reduction of suspected areas and from mine clearance? To what extent has progress in mine action resulted in progress in the implementation of national development and poverty reduction strategies?
- How many (by age and sex) individuals have benefited from mine risk education? To what extent have casualty rates declined?

IV. Priorities for assistance in implementing national plans

- What are the priorities for outside assistance in implementing the national mine action plan or in obtaining necessary information regarding the impact of mined areas?

Actors available to assist States Parties in taking advantage of the Co-Chairs' invitation

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States with mined areas (as of 1 March 2003)

States Parties reporting mined areas in Article 7 reports:

- | | |
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| 1. Albania | 19. Mauritania |
| 2. Argentina (in Falklands / Malvinas) | 20. Mozambique |
| 3. Bosnia and Herzegovina | 21. Nicaragua |
| 4. Cambodia | 22. Niger |
| 5. Chad | 23. Peru |
| 6. Chile | 24. Rwanda |
| 7. Colombia | 25. Senegal |
| 8. Congo (Brazzaville) | 26. Swaziland |
| 9. Croatia | 27. Tajikistan |
| 10. Denmark (from Second World War) | 28. Thailand |
| 11. Djibouti | 29. Tunisia |
| 12. Ecuador | 30. Uganda |
| 13. France (in Djibouti) | 31. United Kingdom (in Falklands / Malvinas) |
| 14. Guatemala | 32. Venezuela |
| 15. Guinea Bissau | 33. Yemen |
| 16. Honduras | 34. Zambia |
| 17. Jordan | 35. Zimbabwe |
| 18. Macedonia, FYR of | |

States Parties that have not yet provided Article 7 reports but which according to the ICBL possess mined areas:

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| 1. Afghanistan | 6. Eritrea |
| 2. Algeria | 7. Liberia |
| 3. Angola | 8. Malawi |
| 4. Cyprus | 9. Namibia |
| 5. Democratic Republic of the Congo | 10. Sierra Leone |