

**Intervention of Denmark at the Meeting of the Standing Committees, Ottawa Convention  
May 25-29, 2009.**

***RE: Update on the Danish process of clearance of anti-personnel mines in accordance with  
Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention***

*Mr. Chairman, Co-Chairs, distinguished delegates, Dear colleagues*

Denmark would like to take this opportunity to thank State Parties for granting approval of our preliminary extension request at the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of State Parties for a period of 22 months. A final time schedule and a complete release plan shall be prepared, and presented before the deadline of January 1, 2011. Let me assure you that Denmark remains fully committed to fulfill our obligations in accordance with Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention. Mr. Chairman, allow me with your permission to present a status of the process of clearance of the Danish minefield, Skallingen.

Denmark's remaining mine field, Skallingen, is concentrated on the west coast of Jutland and originates from the Second World War. No mine related accidents have been reported since 1946. Furthermore, the negative social and economic impact to the local community of the remaining minefield in Skallingen is insignificant.

For operational purposes the suspected mined area was divided into three sub-areas:

Area 1 and 2 covered the dynamic beach and dune areas on the west coast of the peninsula, whereas Area 3 covered the more stable inland marsh and the south coast.

Since 2006, Denmark has considerably reduced the affected areas:

- Area 1 was cleared in 2006.
- Area 2 was cleared in 2007-2008, releasing both minefield area and facilitating further area reduction of unmined, but adjacent land, which could only be accessed through the minefield.
- Thus, of the original 255 hectares of mine affected area, estimated 120 hectares of Area 3 remain to undergo technical surveys during the requested extension period.

Denmark is happy to report today to State Parties of the progress made and the actions taken since the Ninth Meeting of State Parties in fulfilling Article 5 mine clearance obligations.

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Since the ninth Meeting of State Parties, Denmark has conducted a number of technical surveys to establish a proper understanding of the suspect area and enable a better understanding of the problem.

*Firstly*, we have conducted terrain analysis that has established a more accurate definition of the boundaries of Area 3 adjusting the affected area slightly up to 124,6 hectares.

*Secondly*, terrain analysis has provided an understanding of the different conditions of the minefield which has led to a categorizing of the terrain into 5 different terrain types, each of which provides different conditions for the mines. This has great importance for the functionality of the different minetypes as well as the depth of the mines.

*Thirdly*, clearance samples have been conducted in the low marshland areas, which comprise approximately half of the suspect area.

*Fourthly*, detonators and percussion caps from the mines found during the survey have been chemically analyzed.

Although it is still too early to provide any conclusions, these surveys provide a more accurate picture of the mine types, the mine depths and the present quality of the mines, making it possible to map the mine threat and diversify the clearance criteria for each type of terrain. In this way the different threats and depths can be targeted with different clearance methods. ,

As next steps an Environmental Impact Assessment has to be carried out and clearance standards and methods have to be specified as well as a specific clearance plan developed. The area is designated as a specially protected nature and wildlife area under both the RAMSAR Convention and the EU's Birds and Habitats Directives, which of course will influence the way we approach the clearance process. In addition to the technical and environmental aspects, a mandatory conduct of a public consultation process of relevant interested parties has to be carried out.

**Deleted:** This will allow safe and efficient clearance and save time and money once clearance commence. Moreover, increasing the clearance quality will minimize the negative environmental impact of the nature and wildlife of the area.

**Deleted:** Before a final clearance plan can be presented,

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Mr. Chairman,

Denmark will keep State Parties informed of our progress and actions. We have invited the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to participate in an advisory role in the planning process regarding the release of the final area, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank GICHD for its valuable cooperation so far and in the time to come. Finally, should any State Parties have an interest in the experiences Denmark has gained in terms of mine clearance in dynamic beach and dune areas as well as marsh areas, we will be happy to share information.

Mr. Chairman,            THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION