

Update on the Article 5 extensions process

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**Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action
Technologies**

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It is my pleasure to provide you with an update on the Article 5 extensions process which was agreed to at the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties.

You will recall that some of the main features of this process are as follows:

- First: Requesting States Parties are encouraged to submit their request to the President no fewer than nine months before the Meeting of the States Parties or Review Conference at which the decision on the request would need to be taken. The President, subsequently, is charged with informing the States Parties of the receipt of requests and making requests openly available.
- And second: The President and the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs of the Standing Committees are mandated to jointly prepare an analysis of each request;

that in doing our group and each requesting State Party should cooperate fully to clarify issues and identify needs;

that in preparing each analysis, in close consultation with the requesting State, we should, where appropriate, draw on expert mine clearance, legal and diplomatic advice, using the ISU to provide support; and,

that the President, on behalf of the Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs, should submit each analysis to the States Parties well before the MSP or Review Conference preceding the requesting State's deadline.

You will also recall that we are now using this process for the second time. During the course of 2008, when it was used for the first time, working methods that served the States Parties well were developed and recorded in a report presented to the 9MSP by my predecessor.

On 4 March, the Co-Chairs, Co-Rapporteurs and I met for the first time to review these working methods and to ensure that newcomers to the group could become familiar with them. To ensure continuity, and in keeping with past practice, the President-Designate or her representative was invited to attend this and subsequent meetings.

On 31 March, I received a request submitted by Tajikistan. On 27 April, I received a request submitted by Argentina. And on 11 May, I received a request submitted by Cambodia. On 15 May, I wrote to all States Parties to inform them that these requests had been received and that they had been made available on the Convention's website:
www.apminebanconvention.org.

On 26 May, the States Parties mandated to analyse Article 5 extension requests met to begin discussions on requests received. At this meeting, the group received a report of the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance and their Co-Rapporteurs who had met on 13 May to carry out pre-analysis work in accordance with our working methods. It should be noted that this report indicated that Argentina, which is serving as a Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, did not participate in discussions on its request.

With respect to the requests submitted by Cambodia and Tajikistan, it was determined that, while there was a sufficient basis to proceed with the analysis of both, it would be helpful to obtain a number of additional pieces of information from each in order to support the analysis process. The Co-Chairs recommended that a set of questions be forwarded to each. This I did on 25 May. In addition, in order to obtain additional information that may be necessary for a complete analysis, it was recommended that the main demining operators in each country be invited to meet with the analysing group for an informal question and answer session. We proceeded with these discussions today and will continue with them tomorrow.

With respect to the request submitted by Argentina, the initial impression was that there was a sufficient basis to proceed. However, no pre-analysis discussions on the substance of the request were undertaken because a translation of the request was not yet available. It was therefore suggested that the analysing group as a whole begin discussions on the request submitted by Argentina once a translation became available. As a translation is now available, we can proceed with our work.

In keeping with a practice used last year, we have taken advantage of this week's meetings of the Standing Committees to meet informally with representatives of the three requesting States Parties. Yesterday we met with representatives of Argentina and Cambodia and today we met with representatives of Tajikistan.

Also in keeping with a practice used last year, we intend to seek the expert input of the ICBL and the ICRC at a subsequent meeting.

Our aim is to conclude our work by mid-September in order that the analyses that we prepare can be made available well before the Second Review Conference.

In carrying out our work this year, I believe we must remember that we have an important service to provide to all States Parties. We must carry out a serious analysis of requests with a view to submitting them in a timely manner to all States Parties. In addition, our work should be carried out in a manner that sees us working closely with requesting States Parties. In many instances, the analysing group should be supporting these States Parties in improving requests to ensure a high standard is met and that we have an orderly outcome at the Second Review Conference.

Finally, I intend to keep States Parties informed about any key developments in our work. In this regard, I wish to invite States Parties to contact me at any time should they have questions or comments about this process.

Thank you.