

10MSP PRESIDENT

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF ALGERIA'S REQUEST

On 31 March 2011, I received a request submitted by Algeria.

As was the case with other requesting States Parties, during the week of 20 to 24 June 2011, the analyzing group met informally with representatives of Algeria in order to gain a better understanding of the request.

In addition, as with other requests, the analyzing group benefited from expert input provided by the ICRC and ICBL.

The analyzing group was grateful for its collaboration with Algeria on its request – collaboration that led to Algeria submitting a revised request on 17 August 2011.

Some of our key observations with respect to this request are as follows:

- The request indicated that manual clearance is the preferred means of releasing land.

We noted that Algeria could benefit from ensuring the use of the full range of technical and non-technical means to release suspected hazardous areas in keeping with the recommendations adopted by the 9MSP.

- The request indicates that quality control is carried out by quality control inspection officers trained in the application of the UN's International Mine Action Standards and work, according to the different cases, by prodding and/or sampling.

The analysing group noted that Algeria may benefit from integrating an independent quality control mechanism to ensure the quality of operations carried out by its Armed Forces.

- The request indicates that there are three minefields with specific characteristic that make it impossible to give precise dates for completion of the work.

In particular, these minefields include fragmentation mines set into granite rocks over a distance of 8 kilometres, and, mined areas that have been covered with sand.

We noted that Algeria may benefit from discussion of its situation with other States Parties that have experience in clearing similar terrain and which face similar challenges, and that such cooperation could be mutually beneficial, and could lead to improved clearance rates.

- We noted that Algeria deployed two additional units to increase the pace of clearance.
- We observed that delays in proceeding more rapidly with implementation as soon as possible after entry into force hampered Algeria in fulfilling its obligations by its deadline.
- We also noted that, the request indicated that documentation on the mined areas was not provided to Algeria until 20 October 2007, 45 years following the end of hostilities, and that the accompanying maps and sketches did not provide information identifying contaminated areas on Algerian territory other than those already known and recorded as such.
- We noted Algeria's commitment to the obligations of the Convention by removing the mines in two historic sites and to then reconstruct this as an open air museum to commemorate mine victims and martyrs.
- Finally, we noted that Algeria carried out mine risk education and marks minefields when security allows and that at times, due to the security situation, prompt marking of the mined areas is often not possible.

Our conclusions with respect to this request are as follows:

- We concluded that the plan presented by Algeria is workable, comprehensive and complete.

With respect to this plan, though, we noted that, while Algeria was demonstrating a high level of national ownership by fully funding the implementation of the plan, details of the required resources would have been helpful.

- We concluded, as I already have alluded to, that Algeria could benefit from the full range of technical and non technical means of releasing suspected hazardous areas.

In this regard, we noted the importance of Algeria continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with commitments the States Parties had made through the adoption of the Cartagena Action Plan by providing information disaggregated by release through clearance, technical survey and non-technical survey.

- Finally, we concluded that the provision of annual milestones of progress to be achieved, which Algeria included in its request, would greatly assist both Algeria and all States Parties in assessing progress during the extension period.

In this regard, the analysing group further noted that both could benefit if Algeria provided updates relative to the annual milestones of expected progress at meetings of the Standing Committees, Meetings of the States Parties, and at the Third Review Conference.