

Sudan

Dear Mr President,

Dear Representatives of State Parties,

Members of the United Nations, governmental and non-government organization,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know, Sudan is a state party to the Ottawa Treaty since 2004 and has committed to meet the Article 5 deadline by April 2014. The government of Sudan is still committed to meeting this deadline and to free the country from the impact of anti-personnel mines.

Over the past 6 years, the Sudan mine action program has succeeded in reducing the number of known hazards by approximately 85 percent. Around 300 known registered hazards are remaining to be cleared over the next 3 years. Of course, we understand that new hazards might be identified as new areas become open for survey and clearance but this number is not expected to be high. The current reality is the anti-personnel mine problem in Sudan is measurable and can be treated in a short time-frame to meet Sudan's Ottawa obligations on time.

The unstable security situations in Blue Nile (BN) and South Kordufan (SK) States had strongly affected the demining operations when we could not start any demining operations within these areas. It was planned to announce BN State as free of land mine impact by 2012. In addition some of rebel groups had used limited number of mines during this war where some horrible accidents took place among civilians, to reduce this number the Sudanese Army conducted survey and clearance operations on the new affected areas.

This said, the amount of international support to the Sudan Mine Action community has been decreasing since the separation of South Sudan and the subsequent expiry of the UN mission in Sudan. In order to meet the April 2014 deadline, Sudan will need at least 20 mine clearance teams of various types (mechanical and manual) for the next 2 to 3 years. We currently have only 5 NGO teams conducting humanitarian mine clearance.

The National Mine Action Centre, on behalf of the Government of Sudan urgently needs further international assistance in order to ensure that we meet our goals and declare Sudan Mine Impact Free within our current obligations of the Article 5 of Mine Ban Treaty. I am afraid that if that support does not come soon, we will unfortunately be obliged to apply for an extension to the current deadline, which is something we are trying to avoid.

On behalf of the Government of Sudan, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners, donor government and institutions for their previous and continuous assistance in ensuring that Sudan rids itself from the problem of landmines. We, the government of Sudan, would like to stand by and honor our commitments to the international community.

Thanks you