

## ICBL Comments on Eritrea's Article 5 Deadline Extension Request

November 2011

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Article 5 deadline: **1 February 2012**  
Extension period requested: **interim period of 3 years (1 February 2015)**

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### Clarification sought on the Extension Request

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#### Key Issues

- 1. Details of the current estimate of remaining contamination.*
  - 2. Clarification of any change in Eritrea's policy not to accept international technical assistance.*
  - 3. Contingency plans in case international funding is not secured.*
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#### Current estimate of contamination

Eritrea does not have a credible **estimate for the extent of contamination** that remains and has not given **details on the results of survey conducted to date**. The extension request indicates that the extension period is needed to conduct non-technical and technical surveys to identify the exact remaining challenge, in order to prepare a second extension request by March 2014. Eritrea indicated that as of March 2011 it had surveyed 146 of the 411 impacted communities, leaving 265 to be surveyed. Eritrea should provide the results of the 146 surveys completed prior to March 2011, including how many suspected hazardous areas (SHA) were cancelled and how much area was reduced from SHAs without cancellation.

It would also be useful if Eritrea could provide greater clarity on the number of affected communities and suspected hazardous areas cleared in 2001–2010 in relation to the number identified by the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), as there seem to be inconsistencies in the figures provided. How many SHAs remain today and what is the total estimated size, even if further work is needed to refine this estimate? In addition, it would be useful if the request clarified how Eritrea has calculated that 50% of the remaining SHAs identified by the LIS would be reduced by the end of 2012, based partly on its belief that many of them do not contain mines.

#### Technical capacity

Eritrea admits that without "significant external support" it will take much longer to complete the national mine clearing program than was planned initially. It expelled demining NGOs and UN technical support in 2003–2005 and has since declined informally any proposed support from international NGOs, saying it will only accept direct funding to the program. **Given that Eritrea has thus far refused international technical support since 2005, how reliable will its land release methodology be?**

### **Resource mobilization**

The request indicates that an \$8.5 million budget is required to implement activities in 2011–2015. Eritrea intends to cover the salary payments of the demining teams amounting to \$5 million. The request should clarify what is the basis of the **plan to raise the remaining \$3.5 million, and whether there is any contingency plan in case international funding is not secured.**

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

Despite the delays in determining the scope of contamination and conducting clearance, it is positive that Eritrea is seeking an interim extension to get better clarity and develop a work plan for completion. But Eritrea's request is still missing several pieces of information needed to assess its operational plan for 2012–2015. Although Eritrea includes a clearance component in its request, the two more important aspects of the request are completing the surveys to obtain a clearer picture of contamination and the amount of international funds needed to implement the extension request.

Eritrea should present a survey plan through 2014 based on the number of survey teams available and the number of communities and SHAs to survey; explain the significance of reducing the contaminated area identified during the LIS by 50%; and provide a rationale for its resource mobilization strategy in light of the poor record of attracting international funding since 2005.