

11 MSP Australia's Intervention - Clearance deadline extension requests

- . Mr President, as this is the first occasion that Australia takes the floor we wish to congratulate you on your Presidency and assure you of Australia's full cooperation.
- . My remarks apply to the foregoing four requests on the extension requests which were submitted on time.
- . Thank Algeria, Chile, DRC and Eritrea for their requests for extensions to their clearance deadlines under Article 5. Australia is pleased to support them for approval at this MSP.
- . Pleased to see those four requests submitted in good time which facilitated an in-depth consideration of them by the Analysing Group. We appreciate the efforts of the countries to submit quality and timely applications.
- . As a member of the Analysing Group, Australia considered the applications carefully and fed in a range of views on them.
- . We recognise the process to develop requests for extensions, respond to questions from the Analysing Group, and present the requests to the MSPs is time and resource intensive for States Parties with mined areas
 - the process to analyse requests for extension is also intensive for Analysing Group and the Implementation Support Unit
 - nevertheless, we consider that despite its burdens, the process brings a great deal of transparency and depth to the MSP's decisions on extensions. It improves compliance with the Convention. These are important matters for the MSPs because the timeframe for clearance in Article 5 is both a legal obligation and an essential component of delivering the humanitarian benefits of the Convention
 - the States Parties need to be equipped to make a decision on the request for extension – the analysis produced by the Analysing Group is a strong foundation on which to do that
 - a rigorous extensions process can be an important factor domestically for affected States. It is useful tool to motivate States to improve data gathering and analysis, to set out clearly how much land has been cleared and how much remains to be done, to proceed with further clearance expeditiously, and to identify clearly future steps required to reach completion
 - the extensions process has helped to improve plans, clarify remaining challenges and on occasion has reduced the amount of time anticipated to finish clearance.
- . We encourage all States to set out in their requests benchmarks and targets that can be reported on and allow the States Parties to assess progress over time.
- . Algeria and Chile, have already invested substantial national resources to clear their mined areas. We welcome their impressive progress in challenging circumstances.

- . The DRC and Eritrea have sought interim extensions to their clearance deadlines, to provide an opportunity to obtain a more precise picture of the extent of contamination and to develop more comprehensive plans to complete clearance. We welcome such approaches. In our view, where States do not have full knowledge on the remaining challenge, they should request only the amount of time necessary to assess relevant facts and develop a meaningful plan based on these facts.
- . Some States have a long path ahead of them. We encourage them to work with partner States, international organisations, operators and civil society to proceed as expeditiously as possible with clearing mines from their territory. Much guidance and expertise can be found within the community around the Convention including in the ISU, the UN Mine Agencies, operators and many others.
- . The tasks are achievable, with the assistance of the international community.