

Report on the analysis of requests for extensions to Article 5 deadlines

President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties

Agenda Item 9a

In accordance with the decisions of the 7MSP, requests to be considered at this meeting should normally have been submitted no later than the end of March 2012.

On 29 March, I received a request submitted by Afghanistan. On 30 March, I received requests submitted by Angola and Zimbabwe. On 30 April, I received a request submitted by Cyprus.

In keeping with past practice, I informed the States Parties of the receipt of these requests and made them available on the Convention's website.

Prior to the receipt of these requests, the ISU sought to ensure that the analysing group was prepared to carry out its functions.

That is, on 30 March 2012, the ISU organized a half-day seminar for the representatives of States Parties mandated to analyse requests.

With a view to streamlining the work of the analysing group, I invited expert input on the requests from eleven expert organizations selected on the understanding that they are the world's leading not-for-profit organizations with demining expertise.

Of the organizations invited to provide input, seven did so with respect to some or all of the requests. Analysing group members were extremely appreciative for the input provided.

On 16 May 2012, the analysing group met to share initial views on the four requests that had been received by that date.

The analysing group met four times on the margins of the meetings of the Standing Committees primarily to engage in informal discussions with representatives of requesting States Parties.

Each of the States Parties which submitted a request in 2012 accepted the analysing group's invitation to take part in such discussions.

As a result of a cooperative dialogue with the analysing group, two States Parties – Afghanistan and Zimbabwe – revised their requests.

The analysing group additionally met on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012 and 19 September 2012.

On 3 September 2012, in keeping with past practice, the ICBL and the ICRC were invited to share their views on the requests.

Following its last meeting on 19 September, the analysing group completed its work by email with the final versions of analyses submitted by me to the 12MSP Executive Secretary.

In terms of observations of the process in 2012, I wish to share the following:

- First: For the fifth year in a row, the analysis process highlighted that some requesting States Parties, almost ten years after entry into force, still lacked clarity regarding the location of mined areas that contain or are suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines under their jurisdiction or control.

It is recommended, therefore, once again, that all States Parties in the process of implementing Article 5, particularly those that may believe it will be necessary at a future date to submit an extension request, intensify and accelerate efforts to make every effort to identify and to report on mined areas as required.

- Second: The analysis process in 2012 again underscored the importance of States Parties, which lack clarity regarding their Article 5 challenge, requesting only the period necessary to assess relevant facts and develop a meaningful forward looking plan based on these facts.

Two States Parties submitted requests in 2012 on the basis that they needed time to assess relevant facts and develop a meaningful forward looking plan based on these facts. However, members of the analysing group observed that the amount of time requested by one of these States Parties appeared to exceed what was required to carry out these tasks.

- Third: The analysis process in 2012 again underscored the importance of the States Parties which have been granted extensions reporting regularly on time-bound commitments made in requests and on the decisions taken on requests.
- Fourth: While the States Parties which submitted requests in 2012 generally submitted their requests on time, it is once again important to stress that the timely submission of extension requests is fundamentally important to the overall effective functioning of the Article 5 process.
- And fifth: We again observed in 2012 that the analysis process requires a sizeable commitment from Co-Chairs.

Part of our effort this year was to produce recommendations on the process to date with a view to identifying efficient methods to ensure that high quality requests and analyses continue to be prepared.

You will see that these recommendations will be considered under a subsequent agenda item.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the analyzing group for their dedication in 2012.

And I would like to express my gratitude to the four requesting States Parties for their efforts and the cooperative manner with which they engaged with us this year.