

**Comments on the Extension Request Submitted by Cyprus
14th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
30 November 2015**



The ICBL thanks Cyprus for submitting a request in a timely manner in accordance with the process agreed at the Seventh Meeting of States Parties. We also note the positive engagement of Cyprus with the Committee on Article 5.

The ICBL supports the request put forward by Cyprus. However we would welcome further clarifications about the following question.

In November 2013, Cyprus reported that no minefields under Cypriot control remained in the buffer zone, further to the clearance of two mined areas in Dali in 2012 and a third mined area at Potamia by July 2013 in accordance with its National Plan. According to Cyprus, the sole remaining minefield in the buffer zone is located in an area not under Cypriot control.

However the UN Secretary-General's Report on the United Nations' operations in Cyprus, dated July 2015, noted that [quote] "no progress was registered on the issue of access to the four known remaining minefields in the buffer zone, of which three are under the control of the National Guard and one is under the control of the Turkish forces, despite requests by UNFICYP". [end of quote] This raises questions as to whether there may in fact still be contamination in Cypriot-controlled areas of the buffer zone. We hope Cyprus will be in a position to offer further clarification.

We commend the Cypriot authorities for sharing the coordinates of 28 minefields in the area not under Cypriot control, in May 2015. This has allowed for survey operations which is an extremely positive development, and we welcome efforts made by all parties involved.

In addition, we wish to recall Security Council Resolution 2197 of January 2015 – it calls on "both leaders to intensify their efforts to ... facilitate, without delay, access to all remaining mined areas inside and outside the buffer zone, ... and to achieve, finally, a mine-free Cyprus."