

## **ETHIOPIA UPDATE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION**

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - Fifteenth Meeting of The State Parties**

**Santiago, 28 November to 1 December, 2016**

**Presented by**

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to the United Nations Office at Geneva & other International Organizations in Switzerland**

**Madam President**

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the Fifteenth Meeting of State Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. With your able leadership and experience, my delegation is certain that this Meeting will reach a successful outcome.

My delegation also wishes to thank the Government of Chile for the invitation and the warm hospitality offered to us here in this beautiful city of Santiago. My delegation also wants to seize this opportunity to thank the Implementation Support Unit - ISU, led by the Director Mr. Juan Carlos Ruan, for their tireless efforts.

**Madam President,**

In 2015, the 14th Meeting of State Parties agreed to grant an extension until 1 June 2020 for the request submitted by Ethiopia for an extension of the deadline to fulfil its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. In granting the request, the Meeting stressed that Ethiopia submit reports annually to the State Parties on progress made in the implementation during the extended period. In this context, allow me to provide a brief summary of the main points.

To start with, clearance of mines involves considerable financial, technological, material and human resources challenges especially for states like Ethiopia. Thus, the assistance of developed countries and international organizations is very crucial at different levels to overcome the challenge. Priority was given to capacity building and training and accordingly in this reporting period the following activities have been carried out:

- Manual demining training for 20 deminers for the duration of five days was conducted by the International Committee of the Red Cross - ICRC;
- Training on improvised explosive devices - IEDs for 19 deminers in two rounds with one-month duration each was carried out by US experts;
- Refresher course for 206 deminers with a duration of three months carried out by national experts. All costs were covered by the Ethiopian government except for the training manual of deminers, which was undertaken by the ICRC.

Moreover, the Training Centre with its facilities has been fully transferred to the Office in charge of the Mine Action. However, the Department is facing some challenges in its efforts to fully comply with Article 5 clearance obligation. The main challenges faced currently are:

**(a) To complete the construction of the Demining Training Centre**, which was started by the Ex-Ethiopian Mine Action Office and could not finish it due to a shortage of funds. The Centre is very important as Ethiopia still needs continued capacity building to meet its obligations of the Convention;

**(b) To specialize and certify the Rapid Response Teams (RRT) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EODs)** through advanced training. In the case of Ethiopia, most clearance activities are conducted in mine fields, and the deminers are getting experience throughout their course of work. Nevertheless, the current deminers are less experienced in planning and implementing assets to address other explosive remnants of war - ERW. In spite of some steps undertaken to train the units to address this task, international support would still be required in terms of technical advisors;

**(c) To fully equip all the RRT and EODs:** RRTs are equipped with old demining equipment, which would reach their shelf life by the end of this year. The Department wishes to replace those equipments, but has scarce resources to realize its plan.

**Madam President,**

In the extended five years, the Ministry of National Defense, Engineering Main Department (MoND-EMD) plans to employ advanced technical survey in the six regions of Afar, Somali, Oromia, Gambella, Tigray and Beninshangul by deploying TS/RRT teams to confirm the exact mined areas and to release the

suspected hazardous areas. Accordingly, from the beginning of 2017 through the end of May 2020 four demining operators and four Rapid Response Teams will undertake the clearance and surveying of the contaminated regions.

In accordance with the above timeframe and, as we gain clarity through survey operations, we intend to provide a work plan by April 2017 with a list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines including annual projection indicating areas to be dealt each year during the remaining period based on more precise information gathered through concrete operational activities.

In conclusion, Ethiopia remains convinced that the main responsibility of completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention lies with the States Parties concerned. However, the full implementation of their treaty obligations depends on the availability of sufficient resources and technical support of other State Parties and donors. While thanking them for the invaluable cooperation extended so far, we request all stakeholders for their continued assistance.

**I Thank You**