

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina - Committee on Article 5**

Firstly, allow me to thank Bosnia and Herzegovina for its engagement with the Committee over the course of the year. We had fruitful discussions, which provided us a good understanding of the challenges faced by Bosnia and Herzegovina in its implementation of Article 5 commitments.

Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted its request for an extension of its 1 March 2019 deadline on 25 April 2018 upon which the Committee reached out to expert organisations for their inputs<sup>1</sup>. We are thankful to those organisations who submitted comments, namely the GICHD, ICBL and MAG. On 4 June 2018, the Committee wrote to Bosnia and Herzegovina to request additional clarification and information on the extension request and received on 7 September 2018 a revised request for extension incorporating additional information provided in response to the Committee's questions.

The Committee notes that Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted its request a few weeks after the deadline. However, we appreciate the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina informed us of this in advance and kept us abreast of progress.

With regard to the **request**, the Committee is concerned over the fact that, almost 20 years after the entry into force of the Convention, Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a clear picture of the remaining challenge. We welcome that Bosnia and Herzegovina is requesting only a short extension. This will allow it to gather and assess data on landmine contamination with a view to develop a meaningful forward-looking plan. Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated that it would then submit a third request by 31 March 2020, projecting with greater certainty the amount of time required to complete Article 5 implementation.

In terms of substance, the Committee raised the following issues in its analysis of Bosnia and Herzegovina's request:

- First, it is important that Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to report on its progress in a manner consistent with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), disaggregating by area cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey and addressed through clearance.
- Second, it is important that Bosnia and Herzegovina ensures as soon as possible that the most relevant land-release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with IMAS, are in place and applied.
- Third, it is urgent and important that Bosnia and Herzegovina adopts without further delay the National Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025 and the national law in order to ensure implementation and increased financial contributions.
- Finally, given the fact that accurate and high quality information can support cooperation and assistance and accelerate the Convention's implementation, several projects in particular the "Country Assessment" and the "Mine Action Governance

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<sup>1</sup> APOPO, DanChurchAid (DCA), Danish Demining Group (DDG), Handicap International (HI), HALO Trust, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Project” are essential. These projects can also contribute to the integrity of national contamination data, which is a key element in addressing the remaining challenge.

From this, the **Committee concludes** that the plan presented by Bosnia and Herzegovina is ambitious, workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the pace of implementation. The plan is based on allocations from State budgets and contingent upon stable international funding. In this regard, the Convention would benefit from Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting annually to the States Parties on four issues, namely:

- a) Progress in developing relevant land release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with the IMAS and their impact on annual targets as given in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s work plan;
- b) Progress in land release activities relative to the commitments made in its annual work plan, disaggregated in a manner consistent with the IMAS;
- c) Progress in implementing the “Country Assessment” and “Mine Action Governance and Management” projects and the results of these efforts; and
- d) Updates regarding national resource mobilisation efforts and the result of these efforts.

In addition to reporting as noted above, it is important that Bosnia and Herzegovina keeps the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding the implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request and other commitments made in the request at intersessional meetings, Meeting of the States Parties and Review Conferences as well as through its Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting.