

**Comments on Ukraine's extension request
17th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
26 November 2018**

Thank you Madam Vice-President.

It is very good news for the health and integrity of the Mine Ban Treaty that Ukraine has submitted an extension request. As soon as States Parties grant the new deadline, Ukraine will no longer be in violation of Article 5. This is a most welcome development in the life of the treaty. We wish to thank the Committee, and in particular the Ambassador of Switzerland, for the efforts they deployed to make this happen. Dear representatives of Ukraine -- you did the right thing, and it is great to have you back into compliance with a basic requirement of the treaty.

Madam Vice-President, the request is short and it lacks detail, but it does already contain some important information such as a confirmation that Ukraine will fund a portion of clearance activities. It does make sense to ask for a 2021 deadline and to adapt clearance efforts based on how the security situation evolves. We have many questions about the request, and now that the dialogue with the Committee on Article 5 has re-opened on a collaborative basis, we are heartened to know that answers might come soon.

Among the points that will require additional information this week or in the near future, we note the following:

Firstly, the draft law on mine action seems to have passed the first reading recently. Once adopted, it will provide a crucial framework for clearance activities. The law should be adopted and operationalized as a matter of urgent priority.

Secondly, a list of contaminated municipalities or locations should be provided, as well as the estimated size of contamination, on the basis of what is currently known. The list should be updated regularly as survey is carried out and when areas become accessible.

Thirdly, like in any extension request submitted by any State Party, a plan of action should be presented. There is a reference to an "Annex A" that is supposed to present an annual action plan, however the annex was not submitted with the request.

Fourthly, information on land release results in accessible areas should be shared regularly. We would like to know about the areas surveyed and cleared, in square meters, with the exact location, and the number of antipersonnel mines destroyed, including improvised mines.

Finally, Madam Vice-President, we note that Ukraine has outlined what equipment and support it requires, in section #3 of the request, and we wish to draw the attention of States Parties to this section.

Thank you.