Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5

Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of Anti-personnel Mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

Executive summary

Submitted by Sudan

1. Sudan's landmine problem began after the Second World War. During the civil war in Sudan, both anti-personnel mines (APM) and anti-tank mines (ATM) were used. Mine-contaminated areas in Sudan include agricultural land, grazing lands and main and sub-roads, threatening civilians and hampering development efforts and economic recovery.

2. The inevitable result of the prolonged series of conflicts jolted Sudan since 1955 was the wide-scale contamination of anti-personnel, anti-tank mines and other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). In this context, it worthwhile to recall that during the course of the conflicts, landmines were extensively used. The first civil war took place in period 1955 to 1972 and the second civil war began in 1983 and officially ended on 9 January 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). During these conflicts inestimable quantities of mines were laid. However, an exceptional result in the clearance of mines/ERW was achieved as a result of national and international tireless efforts aimed to eradicate mines/ERW in the period from 2005 up to 2011.

3. The Government of Sudan (GoS) signed the Mine Ban Treaty of Ottawa on 4 December 1997 and ratified it on 13 October 2003. On 23 March 2013 Sudan submitted a request to extend its Article 5 mine action deadline to 1 April 2019. This was unanimously agreed by the Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, (13MSP).

4. During the past extension period much interest and sustained support has been awarded to Sudan’s humanitarian mine action program by the State. Further support has been provided by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). The National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), in close collaboration with these actors has analysed the magnitude of the landmine problem and as a result it is the conclusion that Sudan, by all measures will not be able to complete the clearance of all registered contaminated areas within the current

extension period. In this case, Sudan is requesting an extended period of four years, 1 April 2019 - 1 April 2023, in order to accomplish the job as stated in the Convention.

5. Regrettably, in the aftermath of Southern Sudan disintegration in July 2011, the awakening conflict in South and West Kordofan and the Blue Nile States eventuated in additional contamination of APM and other ERW. Unluckily, landmines are once again being utilized in Sudan since the violence reiterated in May/June 2011 in Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has planted landmines throughout the region, which not only brings about death and casualties to civilians but also prevents humanitarian organizations from providing aid. Landmines and explosive ordnances have contaminated more than a third of the state capital of Kadugli town and its vicinity. The risk of landmines has also fettered commercial companies from shipping food and other basic supplies into South Kordofan. The use of landmines has prevented access to many of the villages most critically affected by fighting, since reportedly the main roads have been mined.

6. The contaminated areas with mines and ERW at the start of this extension period, (2013), were located in the Eastern States of Kassala, Gadaref and Red Sea and in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, West Kordofan (Abyei), and the Darfur States, noting that the later locations, being ERW contamination, do not fall under Ottawa Treaty.

7. The overall remaining challenge in 2013 consisted of 279 areas in 6 States, measuring 38,004,274 square metres. This included 120 areas known or suspected to contain APMs, in 5 States, measuring 24,716,510 square metres, including 58 confirmed hazardous area (CHA) measuring 2,937,264 and 62 Suspected Hazardous Area (SHA) measuring 21,779,246 square metres.

8. In spite of the formidable challenges, including a deficit of funds allocated for the Sudan mine action program in the 2nd period of extension and the continuation of war in Blue Nile and South Kordofan. The Sudan mine action programme succeeded in reducing the total number of hazard areas, registered in the database by 93%, from 3,223 to 2,999 APM.

9. **Clearance of Gadaref and Red Sea states has been completed** and both States have been declared free from mines and ERW. This represents one of Sudan's most prominent achievements of the current extension period. **Kassala State was also declared mine free from known and registered mines and ERW in April 2018**.

10. During the extension period Sudan identified 1,001 new SHA measuring 8,009,975 square metres, including 72 new areas suspected to be contaminated with APMs measuring 1,802,666 square metres.

11. Since June 2011 the Sudan Mine Action Programme was facing challenges in accessing most Mines/ERW contaminated areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. However, during the period (2011 – 2018), survey and clearance operations have taken place in both South Kordofan and Blue Nile States. These operations resulted in the registration of 14 CHA measuring 497,909 square metres and 234 SHA measuring 4,633,077 square metres. A total of 248 hazardous areas with 5,130,986 square metres were identified. Out of total number 217 hazardous areas have been cleared, 6 CHA and 211 SHA.

12. Sudan has made significant progress over the course of the last request addressing 1,060 areas releasing 20,405,932 square metres of confirmed and suspected hazardous areas, including 10,261,441 square metres cancelled, 4,704,009 square metres reduced, and 5,440,482 square metres cleared, destroying 1,519 APMs, 470 anti-tank mines, and 32,397 items of unexploded ordnance.

13. The Sudan government funded mine action activities over the past years covering the operational expenses including the clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) from the contaminated lands besides the wags of the workers. The total government fund in the subsequent years; 2014 and 2015 was $500,000 and $1,500,000 USD respectively.

14. In 2016, a sum of US $2,000,000 was spent by GoS to undertake clearance expenses that supported efforts resulting in the declaration of Gadaref and Red Sea states free from landmines and ERW. The State budget also supported the disposal of UXO in Abu Karshola locality of South Kordofan state. In 2017, the total government investment in mine action activities amounted to $2,000,000 USD. During the extension period a sum of US$ 8,000,000 was spent by the Sudan government. Government support to the mine action program is expected to continue and increase, especially with the positive signs lifting of sanctions and general improvement in economic performance of the country.

15. UNMAS-Sudan has undertaken a vital role in mobilising external resources for the Sudan mine action program during the ongoing extension period (April 2014 – April 2019) by availing the following resources; Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF), as well as the countries, Italy, Japan, United States of America and United Kingdom. What has been achieved up to date could not have been achieved unless these external resources were availed. Total funding made available through UNMAS during the extension period totalled, US $6,625,609.

16. There are number of practical obstacles that have impeded Sudan from meeting its obligations under Article 5 of Ottawa Treaty during the current extension period. These challenges are itemized below:

- Inadequate Funding for Demining Operations
- Renewed and On-going Conflicts
- New Level of Contamination
- Information Gathering
- Lack and Insufficient Demining Equipment
- Deep Buried Mines/ERW and Metallic Contents of the Soil
- Climatic factors and atmospheric conditions

17. **Learned Lessons** identified include**,** conflict and insecurity can jeopardize planning and preparation. Lack of funding is another concern, Population movements; high metallic contents of the soil in hazardous areas and heavy rainy season will cause to delay the overall clearance process.

18. Landmines bring about death and causalities to civilians especially children, as well as wildlife. Beside the direct effects on life, it imposes a heavy economic burden on survivors and their relatives. Comparably, the cost of mine clearance on average is less than to provide an artificial limb to a survivor from mine or ERW accident. The existence of landmines and ERW cause extreme socio-economic and environmental hardships to the affected population. Anti-personnel landmines are considered one of the most significant factors to an ailing economy and a barrier to social development in Sudan. The economic impact of landmines prevents people in the affected areas from working, and victims with disabilities face difficulties in finding employment and remain dependent. Thus, landmines prevent sustainable development, continue to pose a threat to human security and are a major obstacle to peace.

19. Unfortunately, with exception of some limited parts in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, the rest of the state of Blue Nile and South Kordofan are not accessible because of war since 2011. Nonetheless, plans have been prepared to tackle the problem of mines in high threat areas once conditions permit. **The total remaining contamination, including all device types is 224 hazardous areas, measuring 26,462,436 square metres**.

20. As of 28 February 2018, Sudan's remaining APM contamination includes 98 areas known or suspected to contain APM, measuring 19,285,410 square metres, including 53 CHA measuring 2,418,930 square metres and 45 SHA measuring 16,866,480 square metres.

21. The remaining contamination of ATM consists of 27 known or suspected areas measuring 4,990,051 square metres, including 4 CHA measuring 3,303,298 square metres and 23 SHA measuring 1,686,753 square metres. The remaining level of ERW contamination consists of 99 areas measuring 2,186,975 square metres, including 96 CHA measuring 2,046,575 square metres and 3 SHA measuring 140,400 square metres.

22. Based on the situation elucidated above, Sudan has comprehensively become conscious of the level of contamination and the remaining hazardous areas under its jurisdiction or control.

23. Accordingly, as Sudan is now pursuing another four (4) year extension; from 1 April 2019-1 April 2023, Sudan confidently believes it can address all registered mines and ERW contaminated areas, provided the continuity of funding flows, technical and logistical support and security stability. These factors are part of the challenge that operational planning for the extension period has been considered.

24. While the extension period focuses on the clearance of the already registered hazardous areas, additional survey will be required in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, the Darfur States and Abyei as security situation in those places is unpredictable with the likelihood of war continuing. In this regard, Sudan has developed the work plan below.

25. Sudan has developed a 2 phase work plan to address its remaining Article 5 challenge. Phase 1 covers the remaining period of its current extension request, 2018-2019, Phase 2 the period of the extension request (2019-2023).

26. It is important to note that the work plan has been developed based on Landmine Impact Surveys (LIS) undertaken during 2007-2009. It is expected that access to remaining areas will result in the cancellation of LIS areas as well as new hazardous areas being identified. In this way, Sudan will keep States Parties informed annually, of changes in access and progress in survey implementation. Once survey has been completed Sudan will inform States Parties of the impact of newly identified hazardous areas as well as the results of any re-survey on the milestones and resources as given in this work plan. Based on these impacts, Sudan will provide an updated work plan for the remaining period of the extension, and may be required to request additional time and resources, as necessary.

Land release milestones by year, (2019-2023)

Year	***Hazards***				***Area to be addressed***	
	SHA	*CHA*	*Total*	*Area Cancelled though non-technical survey (NTS)*	*Area Cleared*	*Total Area to be addressed*
2017-18	80	3	83	3,783,116	420,346.2	4,203,462
2018-19	54	3	57	11,944,390	1,327,154	13,271,544
2019-20	16	2	18	4,943,930	549,325.6	5,493,256
2020-21	4	16	20	1,045,828	116,203.1	1,162,031
2021-22	13	7	20	1,054,315	117,146.1	1,171,461

2022-23	4	22	26	1,044,614	116,068.2	1,160,682
Total	171	53	224	23,816,192	2,646,244	26,462,436

27. In 2018, three national entities, Friends of peace and Development organization (FPDO), JASMAR and National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD) delivered quality results. To ensure quality outputs, National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) conducted frequent quality assurance (QA) visits to the field monitored by UNMAS Sudan technical advisor.

28. At the time of writing, there are only two international contractors, Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AAR Japan) which is implementing Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA) in Kassala State and Dynasafe which is deployed and focused on ordnance disposal operation activities in the Darfur States.

29. As mentioned above, Dynasafe is currently operating in the Darfur States where their main task is to support United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) tasks in the Darfur States. The Mine Action organization assets distributed is reflected in the following table:

Operator deployment by location and year

Operators/Years	*2017*	*2018*	*2019*	*2019 – 2023*
NUMAD	Blue Nile Kassala	South Kordofan Blue Nile Kassala	South Kordofan Blue Nile	South Kordofan West Kordofan Blue Nile
JASMAR	Kassala Blue Nile	South Kordofan Blue Nile	South Kordofan Blue Nile	South Kordofan Blue Nile
FPDO	South Kordofan	South Kordofan	South Kordofan	South Kordofan West Kordofan
DYNASAFE	Darfur States	Darfur States	Darfur States	Darfur States

30. This distribution based on the required demining capacities to be fully operating and funded during the extension period. In total following assets will be deployed:

- Two mechanical teams (MECH).
- Seven manual clearance teams (MCT, 8 deminers each).
- Six multi-tasking teams (MTT, 4 deminers each).
- Three mine detection dog teams (MDD, 3 dogs each).

31. Presently, there are no international entities working in Sudan, if the Darfur States exempted. It is hoped that with increased accessibility to its remaining contaminated areas the results of re-survey of existing areas and identification of new areas Sudan will possess a clear and accurate measure of its capacities and needs. In this way, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and commercial companies are encouraged to engage with Sudan to begin how they can have a positive contribution to the overall efforts aim to clear the lands from mines/ERW.

32. The estimated level of funding required for the period of the extension is US$ 59,838,606. This includes a total of US$ 12, 000,000 allocated by the Government of Sudan and identified funding from UNMAS of 1,367,470. This presents a current funding gap of US$46,471,138. Funding required per year is given below:

- 2018: 13,110,647
- 2019: 17,984,432
- 2020: 14,627,664
- 2021: 4,931,661
- 2022: 4,931.661
- 2023: 4,252,541

33. Sudan's plan for the clearance of the contaminated areas is based on the assumption that the security situation in regions contaminated with mines and ERW will improve. It is hoped that Blue Nile and South Kordofan states will become secure for demining teams. Funding again is another major concern and all plans base on the assumption of adequate funding to the programme.

34. Though the predominant optimistic atmosphere mainly emanating from the lifting of sanctions and the welcoming of international organizations. If conditions continue as described above during the remaining period of the current extension and the new extension period, sadly we should prepare for a similar result.

35. There is a very real humanitarian urgency for mine action activities to take place in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States which is currently not being met. Not only because of the significant difficulties in accessing mine affected areas due to ongoing armed conflict in many of the mine affected areas. The United Nations and NGO entities based in Kadugli and El-Damazin e.g. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have limited direct access to the mine-affected areas due to the security uncertainties. In addition, organizations working cross-border from neighbouring countries have experienced a decrease in reachable areas over the last few years. While this gloomy picture may suggest that the prospects of mine action will be at a very low point especially after the imminent declaration of Kassala state as devoid of APM and ERW in December 2017. The lifting of sanctions would positively reflect on the ongoing national political dialogue as well improve access to the two States. These that may increase the possibility of mine action activities taking place.

36. During the current extension period there is a realm of possibilities that have affected the completion of planned demining activities and are expected to have the same influence on operations in the forthcoming extension period. The risks that are likely to be encountered are as follows:

(a) **The Overall Political and Economic Situation:** The plan assumes that the political and economic situations remain in favour of clearance operations.

(b) **Security Situation in the Operational Areas:** Ongoing conflict in some parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile may affect the operations plan.

(c) **Funding:** The plan for clearance of the mined areas in Sudan largely depends on the continuation of funding from the international community as well as the Government of Sudan.

(d) **Weather:** Generally, Sudan experienced heavy rains from June to October. During this time of the year operations activities may shut-down or conducted in limited areas which may result in failure to meet the stated deadlines of the extension period. There is great possibility that the floods resulted from the heavy rains move or deeply bury mines and ERW resulting in miss mines or ERW which may also delay the process.

(e) **Terrains:** Minefields in the southern part of Sudan are located in thick vegetation and mountainous areas. The vegetation drills and demining of hard surface of an even ground surface (sharp slops) both are time consuming.