

---

**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**

8 September 2020  
English  
Original: Spanish

---

**Eighteenth Meeting**  
**Geneva, 16-20 November 2020**  
Item 11 of the provisional agenda  
**Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5**

**Request for extension of the deadline for  
completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines  
in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention**

**Executive Summary**

**Submitted by Colombia**

1. The 2020 request for extension by Colombia contains information on contamination by improvised anti-personnel mines in Colombia and an explanation of why the country needs an extension of four years and ten months, from 1 March 2021 to 31 December 2025, to fulfil the commitments arising from its ratification of the Convention.
2. The introduction covers the situation in the country in 2010 – the date of the previous extension request – and the need to make another request in March 2020. The request was structured taking into account the recommendations contained in the proposed guidelines on the preparation of extension requests under Article 5 of the Convention, adopted at the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties in November 2008. It thus consists of three main chapters and 11 technical annexes organized as described below.
3. Chapter I contains an assessment of the implementation period covered by the previous extension, from 1 March 2011 to 1 March 2021. The assessment was structured around the commitments – set forth in the country’s 2010 request for extension – relating to the distribution of tasks, the prioritization of resources, the optimization of information management and the building of land release capacity.
4. The assessment shows that Colombia has made satisfactory progress on its commitments, as the number of deminers operating in the field went from 360 in 2011 to 4,566, all accredited deminers of both sexes, in December 2019. In addition to the significant increase in clearance capacity, chapter I describes improvements in the information sphere, which made it possible to categorize the country’s 1,122 municipalities by type of contamination and distribute them among the 11 humanitarian demining organizations that were in operation as of December 2019.
5. Further progress includes the release of 6,368,003 m<sup>2</sup> of cleared land and the destruction of 3,733 improvised anti-personnel mines (to 31 December 2019). The clearance had a direct impact on the 2,418,975 people who make up the rural population of the 212 municipalities that were declared free of suspected contamination, as well as an indirect impact on the urban population of those municipalities, or an estimated 12,079,061 people.



6. Chapter II describes the current contamination situation and the need for Colombia to request a further extension in 2020. It also describes the ongoing difficulty in implementing the Convention, emphasizing that the contamination in Colombia stems from the persistent use of improvised anti-personnel mines by organized armed groups, whose activities in the country are in violation of the Convention.
7. In this chapter, Colombia describes for the global mine action community the advances and improvements in both information management and the building of intervention capacity in humanitarian demining. A contamination baseline can be drawn based on the results of operations conducted up to December 2019 and on data gathered through non-technical surveys, which are used to determine the clearance goal under the 2020–2025 Operational Plan on Humanitarian Demining.
8. The chapter includes information on the current intervention status in the 1,122 municipalities of Colombia, which are categorized by type of contamination. It also provides detailed information on the areas known to have been mined, those suspected of having been mined and those that the country considers “known unknowns”.
9. Chapter II is designed to show the global mine action community the technical and logistical challenges posed by the type of contamination in Colombia. Through photographic reports by humanitarian demining organizations and other sector actors, Colombia seeks to provide a qualitative description of the ongoing tasks.
10. Chapter II highlights the circumstances that prevent Colombia from implementing the Convention within the prescribed period, forcing it to request another extension of four years and ten months, from 1 March 2021 to 31 December 2025. This length of time is based on the projected annual progress agreed to by each humanitarian demining organization, including annual goals established for the period 2020–2023. In the period 2024–2025, the hope is to be able to intervene in areas of contamination considered “known unknowns” – that is, in 165 municipalities with suspected contamination.
11. The country’s 2020 extension request presents realistic arguments regarding the time needed, putting particular emphasis on the humanitarian and socioeconomic impact of a further extension, especially given how the comprehensive action against anti-personnel mines drives other policies on territorial development and peacebuilding in the country.
12. Notwithstanding the gains made during the 2011–2020 extension, the State continues to face difficulties in meeting its obligation to destroy anti-personnel mines in its territory by 1 March 2021 because conducting humanitarian demining operations is hampered in some areas by organized armed groups that engage in criminal activities involving the use of anti-personnel mines.<sup>1</sup>
13. In addition, the size of the identified areas with suspected contamination is larger than what could be cleared within the allotted period. In the 156 municipalities where interventions are currently under way, dangerous areas and confirmed dangerous areas have been identified, and 3,334,199 m<sup>2</sup> of land are being cleared. Demining work has yet to begin in approximately 4,949,100 m<sup>2</sup> of those 156 municipalities. It will therefore be difficult to achieve the overall clearance goal of 8,283,299 m<sup>2</sup> by the deadline of 1 March 2021 with currently available resources.
14. Chapter III presents the 2020–2025 Operational Plan, which provides more specifics about the actions proposed in the 2020 extension request and includes a cost projection for that period.
15. It establishes data-driven clearance goals for the period 2020–2023 with regard to the dangerous areas and confirmed dangerous areas identified to December 2019. The areas to be cleared amount to 3,334,199 m<sup>2</sup>, or 40 per cent of the land being cleared in the 156 municipalities with active operations. The goals for the same period in the municipalities where clearance is under way and in sectors where it has yet to begin are to clear some

---

<sup>1</sup> The 2019 Defence and Security Policy for Lawfulness, Entrepreneurship and Equality notes that organized armed groups are active “in areas where criminal economic networks dominate, through the creation of new illegal groups and the arrival or continuity of others, with the aim of controlling illicit wealth deriving primarily from drug trafficking and unlawful mineral extraction”. Document available at [www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/Prensa/Documentos/politica\\_defensa\\_deguridad2019.pdf](http://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/Prensa/Documentos/politica_defensa_deguridad2019.pdf).

4,949,100 m<sup>2</sup>, or 60 per cent of the remaining land. According to a note at the end of the chapter, the contamination problem in Colombia will not be resolved with the above-mentioned clearance goals because there are 165 municipalities where contamination has been recorded but where, as at December 2019, security indicators were not sufficiently high to commence clearing operations.

16. Chapter III provides an assessment of existing operational capacity, intervention methods and current national mine action standards, as well as cost estimates. It also provides a list of factors that could jeopardize intervention, two main ones in particular, one of which is tied to changes in the security situation and the other to a reduction in funding.

17. Regarding changes in the security situation, Colombia continues to deal with contamination stemming from the use of improvised anti-personnel mines by organized armed groups, which hampers implementation of the Convention.

18. As for the reduction in funding for the mine action programme, financing from the international community fell by 52 per cent between 2017 and 2019, owing chiefly to new thematic priorities among donors regarding other programmes associated with the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace and to new humanitarian emergencies, such as the migration of Venezuelan nationals to Colombia.

19. The forecasts that informed the 2020–2025 Operational Plan on Humanitarian Demining and part of the 2020 extension request are based on an analysis of the current capacity of humanitarian demining organizations, an established operational framework consisting of 15 national mine action standards, as well as methods and norms for quality control and assurance and for demining, surveying and clearance. The Plan also takes into account the lessons learned from the classification of the contamination in the municipalities in which clearance operations will be conducted and contains a proposal to categorize the 166 municipalities where intervention is planned by the type of contamination by which they are affected.

20. Lastly, the Plan, which is an integral part of the 2020 extension request, contains an estimate indicating that the total cost of humanitarian demining activities, mine risk education and international technical assistance for the period 2020–2025 will be US\$ 250 million. Of that amount, an estimated US\$ 72 million would come from the State budget. Therefore, a contribution of US\$ 174 million is needed from the international community in order to complete the operations in the 156 municipalities where operations are under way, including some US\$ 88,930,000 to cover the needs of civilian humanitarian demining organizations for the period 2020–2023 and US\$ 40,183,436 to sustain the operations of Humanitarian Demining Engineers Brigade No. 1 for the period 2022–2025.

21. The extension request has 11 technical annexes providing more information on and an analysis of contamination by anti-personnel mines in Colombia as it stood in March 2020. The annexes include information provided by mine action entities and organizations in Colombia, the list of currently assigned municipalities and the heads of operations there, applicable law, gender mainstreaming measures, the activities planned under the 2020–2025 Operational Plan, the national intervention baseline as at 31 December 2019, financial forecasts for the Plan and information on the results framework under the 2020–2025 strategic plan.

22. In addition to the information for the period 2021–2023 provided annually in its Article 7 report, Colombia will submit at the Twenty-first Meeting of the States Parties in 2023 an updated version of the 2020–2025 Operational Plan following the change of government to take place in 2022, which will involve the formulation of a new national development plan for the 2022–2026 term, and an update to the information submitted in March 2020.

23. The preparation of this extension request, which was led by the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, involved the coordination of State entities, oversight bodies, national and international organizations and some of the country's most emblematic representatives of the comprehensive action against anti-personnel mines. The process centred on the formulation in 2019 of the 2020–2025 strategic plan "Towards a Colombia Free from Suspected Anti-Personnel Mines for All Colombians", for which the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided technical assistance.

24. The Convention Implementation Support Unit provided international technical assistance for the preparation of the country's 2020 extension request.

---