



## EXTENSION REQUEST TO ARTICLE 5 OF THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

Submitted by the **Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

Prepared by the National Committee for Demining and  
Rehabilitation

31 March 2008

Mr. President, Co-chairs, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for giving Jordan the opportunity to present the key aspects of its extension request.

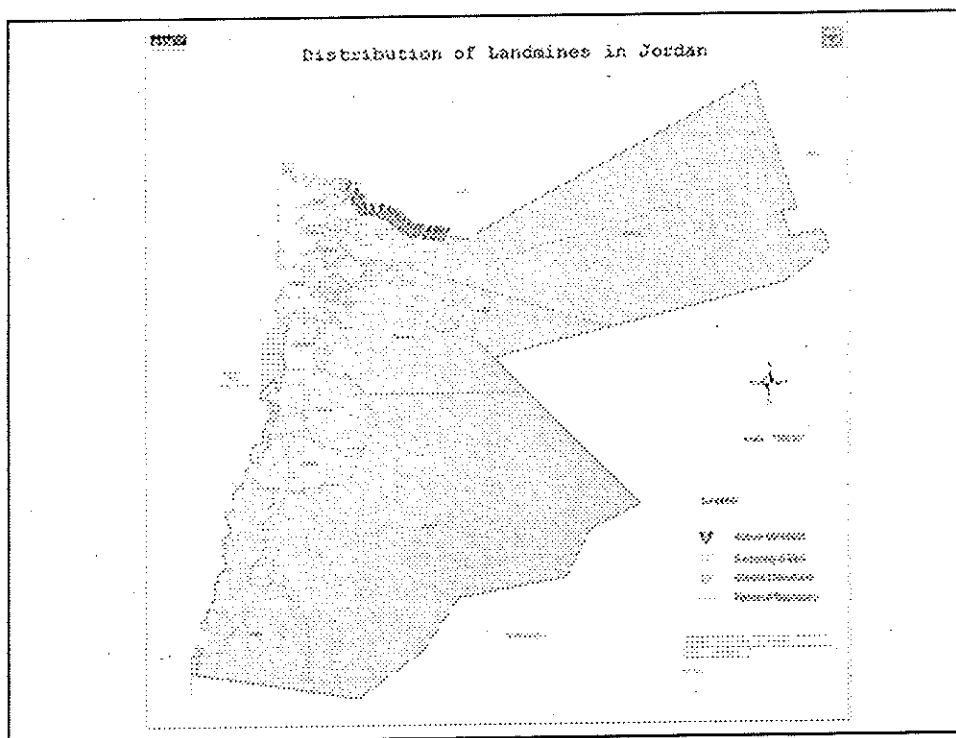
Over the course of the last few years, mine action has become an important priority for the Government of Jordan. Through its support to the 'national authority' the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR), the government has demonstrated its firm commitment to mine action. This has been evidenced by the great increase in clearance rates and safety; as well as the overall surge in activity in all pillars of mine action.

The NCDR, along with its partners, has worked diligently to achieve the national vision of a Jordan 'free of landmines.'

The extension request document submitted in March, described in detail Jordan's experience in mine action and provided evidence that it has the capacity, knowledge, technical skills, to achieve its goals within the requested extension period.

What we believe makes Jordan's case a strong one, is that the key elements for completion are present. The required approvals have been secured, finances raised, most material assets in-place, and detailed work plans formulated for execution.

Please allow me to provide this assembly with a brief outline of some of the key aspects of Jordan's request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline.



As illustrated in this map, most mines were planted along Jordan's western and northern borders to stop incursions from outside actors.

The majority of Jordan's 500 minefields were located on some of its most fertile land, namely the Jordan Valley; impacting Jordan's economy and its social development, while posing a major humanitarian threat to approximately 500,000 people (8% of Jordan's population) who lived in close proximity to these minefields. According to the national victim database, there were 755 reported accidents between 1948 and 2007.

For the past 15 years the Jordan Armed Forces have assigned the Royal Engineering Corps to tackle demining activities in the country. In 2006 the Norwegian People's Aid Mine Action Program became the second operator in the country.

## **Circumstances that impeded compliance in the 10 year period**

- No effective 'Mine Action Authority' existed until 2004
- Lack of domestic and international partners
- Environmental Challenges: flooding and soil erosion
- Shortage of human and financial resources

Several elements have contributed to Jordan's inability to meet its 10-year compliance obligations under Article 5:

**Firstly, Mine Action was orchestrated solely by the military during the period 1993 – 2004.** The Jordan Armed Forces managed mine action in Jordan to the best of its ability; but they did not have the capacity or financial support to achieve great strides in demining.

**Secondly, During the first five year period post Jordan's accession to the MBC, no 'effective' mine action authority existed.** However, 2004 marked a turning point in the life of NCDR, as a new chairman, a new board of directors and a new director were appointed and given the challenging mandate of expediting mine clearance, raising capacity, and streamlining all aspects of mine action. Since then NCDR has been an effective and robust organization that has provided mine action in Jordan with sound leadership and guidance.

**Thirdly, Prior to 2004 there was limited contact with the vibrant international mine action community in the area of partnerships.** The JAF received limited funding for equipment, machines, and training, but did not benefit greatly from the advances being made in humanitarian mine action on the management, technical, and institutional levels. Thus, the potential outputs that could have been produced by the REC were greatly reduced. Working with the various line-ministries, international donor community and UNDP, NCDR has benefited in increased capacity and delivery of mine action results.

**Lastly, The extreme flooding and erosion in the Jordan Valley slowed the demining process tremendously.** Given the nearness of populations to the minefields in the Valley the REC took extra precautions – sometimes excavating up to 3 meters of shifted soil – to ensure all mines were located along the river bank and in the fertile floodplains which are heavily used for agriculture by small landholders and pastoralists.

## **Financial & Technical Resources**

- NBP's budget of \$13 million mobilized
- NCDR manages the execution of the NBP and provides Quality Management
- Implemented by Norwegian People's Aid.
- The Royal Engineering Corps lend EOD support

Building on a recent history of strong international support NCDR and UNDP has been able to mobilize \$13 million for the Northern Border Project through a consortium of six donors, namely: Australia, Canada, EC, Germany, Japan, and Norway.

The NCDR is managing the Project and provides Quality Management over the demining process being implemented by Norwegian People's Aid Mine Action Program.

In addition the Royal Engineering Corps lends EOD support and is responsible for constructing the replacement border security system.

## **Other Remaining Tasks: Jordan Valley**

- Random Sampling and Verification
- Desk Assessment and Review of 276 Minefields Records
- Community Interviews
- Funding

Clearance of 276 minefields in the Jordan Valley was undertaken in the early 90s by the REC.

During this period the REC removed 116,394 mines. Nevertheless, after clearance mines continued to kill or injure civilians. NCDR believes it has an obligation to exert all possible efforts to eliminate any lingering threat to the local population.

NCDR seeks to ensure that minefields and other suspected hazardous areas meet present-day international standards by undergoing further verification in order to meet the standards laid out in its National Technical Standards and Guidelines of 2006.