

Analysis of the request submitted by Sudan for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

**Submitted by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation
(Chile, Colombia, the Netherlands, Switzerland)**

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1. Sudan ratified the Convention on 13 October 2003, and the Convention entered into force for Sudan on 1 April 2004. In its initial transparency report submitted on 1 October 2004 Sudan reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Sudan was obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 April 2014. Sudan, believing that it would be unable to do so by that date, submitted a request to the 2013 Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties (13MSP) for a 6 year extension of its deadline, until 1 April 2019. The 13MSP agreed unanimously to grant the request.
2. In granting Sudan's request in 2013, the 13MSP noted that even with a consistent and sizeable effort having been undertaken by Sudan going back even before entry into force of the Convention, Sudan faces a significant remaining contamination challenge in order to fulfil its obligations under Article 5.
3. On 28 March 2018, Sudan submitted to the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation a request for extension of its 1 April 2019 deadline. On 4 June 2018, the Committee wrote to Sudan to request additional clarification and information on the extension. On 17 August 2018, Sudan submitted to the Committee a revised request. The Committee noted with satisfaction that Sudan had submitted its request in a timely manner and had engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee. Sudan's request is for 4 years, until 1 April 2023.
4. The request indicates that at the start of Sudan's extension period, 28 March 2013, Sudan had a remaining challenge of 38,004,274 square metres, of which 24,716,510 square metres were contaminated with anti-personnel mines, including 58 confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) measuring 2,937,264 square metres and 62 suspect hazardous areas (SHA) measuring 21,779,246 square metres. The request indicates that during the period of the first extension request Sudan identified an additional 8,009,975 square metres of new suspect hazardous area, including 1,802,666 square metres contaminated with anti-personnel mines. The Committee noted that Sudan's efforts to implement Article 5 are only part of the totality of efforts required to address explosive hazards and, as such, noted the importance of Sudan continuing to provide information disaggregated by type of contamination.
5. The request indicates that during the extension period Sudan addressed 1,060 mined areas, releasing 20,405,932 square metres, including 10,261,441 square metres cancelled, 4,704,009 square metres reduced, and 5,440,482 square metres cleared, destroying 1,519 anti-personnel mines, 470 anti-tank mines, and 32,397 items of unexploded ordnance. In this context, the Committee noted the importance of Sudan continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with International Mine Action Standards, disaggregating by area cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey and addressed through clearance.
6. The Committee observed a minor discrepancy in the area reported as remaining to be addressed in 2013 of 38,004,274 square metres (table 4), the amount of area addressed 20,405,932 square

metres(table 6), the amount of new area identified as SHA, 8,009,975 square metres (table 5)and the remaining challenge reported as of 2018, 26,462,436 square metres (table 12).

7. The request indicates that over the course of the last request Sudan completed clearance of Gadaref and Red Sea States and that Kassala State is expected to be complete in 2018. The request further indicates that in the course of 2017-2018 Sudan conducted, 'mine survey assessments' in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, resulting in the identification of 38 hazardous areas, including 1 CHA and 37 SHA measuring 2,830,824 square metres and reported having addressed 284,182 square metres.
8. The request indicates that, the 'data clean-up' process initiated during the initial extension request is still ongoing. The Committee wrote to Sudan requesting further information on progress in 'data clean-up process', including additional support required and a detailed timeline for addressing this matter as soon as possible. It is expected that the result of the data clean-up process will have no effect on the area cleared but will have effect on the cancelled area which will be incorporated into the database and this is in turn will minimize the difference reflected between areas cleared and size of total hazards closed. The Committee, while welcoming the efforts of Sudan to obtain increased clarity regarding its implementation challenge through measures such as "database clean-up", underlined the importance of these efforts being carried out as soon as possible.
9. The request indicates the following circumstances impeding implementation during the initial extension period: (a) Inadequate funding for demining operations, (b) renewed and on-going conflicts, (c) new level of contamination, (d) information gathering, (e) lack of and insufficient demining equipment, (f) deep buried mines/ERW and metallic contents of the soil, and (g) climatic factors and atmospheric conditions.
10. The request indicates that anti-personnel mines continue to have humanitarian, socio-economic and political impacts in Sudan, including: continuing injuries and death to local populations, internal displacement, prevention of access to roads, agriculture, forest and water resources. The Committee noted that completion of Article 5 obligations during the requested extension period had the potential of making a significant contribution to improving human safety and socio-economic conditions in Sudan.
11. The request indicates that the remaining challenge includes 98 hazardous areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines to be addressed measuring 19,285,410 square metres, including 53 CHA measuring 2,418,930 square metres and 45 SHA measuring 16,866,480 square metres. Sudan's remaining challenge is located in two states, Blue Nile (1,055,063 square metres) and South Kordofan (18,197,956 square metres).
12. As noted, Sudan's request is for 4 years (until 1 April 2023) with Sudan's rationale for this being to address remaining anti-personnel mine contamination in two States of Blue Nile and South Kordofan. The request indicates that Sudan's plan for the clearance of the remaining contaminated areas is based on the assumption that the security situation in regions contaminated with mines and ERW will improve. The request also indicates that during the extension period, Sudan intends to double efforts aiming to clear all hazards registered in the data-base, conduct surveys of the suspected hazardous areas to determine and clear the confirmed mined areas as well as mobilize more domestic resources and reinforce coordination with donors. In the same vein, Sudan will work to create a positive environment for mine action in Sudan. The request further indicates that during the extension period Sudan will carry out actions to strengthen the capacity of the National Mine Action Centre.

13. The request indicates that given increased accessibility to remaining contaminated areas, international NGOs and commercial companies are encouraged to engage with Sudan to plan how they can make a positive contribution to overall mine action efforts. The Committee wrote to Sudan requesting further information on Sudan's efforts to engage and facilitate the work of international NGOs in Sudan. The request indicates that Sudan welcomes any interested international mine action NGOs to deploy its assets to Sudan and assist Sudan in meeting its Article 5 obligations.
14. The Committee noted that access to the Blue Nile and South Kordofan is dependent upon improvement in security, progress in the peace process as well as the availability of sufficient funding. The Committee wrote to Sudan regarding additional information on the ongoing national political dialogue and consideration of mine action as part of this dialogue. Sudan's revised request indicates that there is a general prevailing optimism these developments actually furnished a conducive atmosphere for the country to identify several possible openings in the two states, Blue Nile and South Kordofan, which may substantially increase the possibility of mine action activities to take place in the forthcoming few years.
15. The Committee noted that information on the remaining challenge in these States is based on data from the landmine impact survey (LIS), and as access improves, 'general survey' and 're-assessment' will be carried out. The Committee wrote to Sudan requesting further information on the results of mine assessment surveys and its efforts to provide demining capacities in support of humanitarian access to these states. Sudan's revised request includes a 'Plan for Promotion and Improvement of NMAC Quality Management System' that includes strengthening the survey capacities of NMAC QA staff. The Committee also wrote to Sudan regarding the use of terminology consistent with IMAS to ensure a clear understanding of the survey process to be carried out.
16. The Committee noted that the number of anti-personnel mines destroyed during the previous extension (1,519) represents anti-personnel mine contamination commensurate with low density minefields. Since the National Mine Action Strategy as well as National Mine Action Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) are currently in the process of being reviewed, the Committee noted the importance of Sudan ensuring, in a manner consistent with Action #9 of the Maputo Action Plan that the most relevant land release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with IMAS, are in place and applied for the full and expedient implementation of the Convention. The Committee noted the commitment of Sudan to review and adopt national mine action standards. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan keeping the States Parties apprised of steps to fulfil these commitments.
17. The request indicates that Sudan has a plan to address all mine/ERW contamination during the period of the extension, including 80 CHA and 3 SHA measuring 4,203,462 square metres in 2018, 54 CHA and 3 SHA measuring 12,271,544 square metres in 2019, 16 CHA and 2 SHA measuring 5,493,256 square metres in 2020, 4 CHA and 16 SHA measuring 1,162,031 square metres in 2021, 13 CHA and 7 SHA measuring 1,171,461 square metres in 2022, and 4 CHA and 22 SHA measuring 1,160,682 square metres in 2023. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan consistently providing information in a disaggregated manner by type of munition and areas "known" (CHA) or "suspected" (SHA) to contain mines.
18. The request indicates that Sudan will require US \$59,838,606 of funding for the period, (2018-2023). This request further indicates a contribution from the Government of Sudan of US \$12,000,000, being US \$2,000,000 per year, with an additional \$1,367,470 secured from international financial resources, through UNMAS for 2018. The Committee noted that during the period of the previous request (2014-2017), Sudan released 20,405,932 square metres, with

a budget of USD 14.6 million. The Committee further noted financial projection of US \$59,838,606 for a remaining challenge of 26,462,436 square metres. In this regard, the Committee wrote to Sudan requesting greater clarity concerning the calculations of projected financial requirements.

19. The Committee noted that, given the importance of external support to ensure timely implementation, Sudan could benefit from enhancing its resource mobilisation strategy. Also as concerns resource mobilisation, the Committee noted the commitment of Sudan to respond to the needs and priorities of its current donor base through regular liaison, timely reporting and visibility initiatives. The request also indicates that Sudan will aim to expand its donor base by identifying potential new donors including Gulf States, emerging economies and identify new “non-conventional” partners such as philanthropists and private individuals, foundations and commercial entities. The request further indicates that Sudan will work in cooperation with UNMAS in this regard. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan keeping the States Parties apprised of steps to fulfil these commitments and on the challenges faced in this regard.
20. The Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Sudan submitting to the Committee updated detailed work plans by 30 April 2020 and 31 March 2022 for the remaining period covered by the extension. The Committee noted that these work plans should contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with the IMAS, annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget based on new funding levels.
21. The Committee noted that the request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request, including photos and case studies on post clearance activities, further detail on socio-economic implications of remaining contamination, information on landmine victims and response to accidents undertaken by the Government of Sudan, detailed annual work plans for each State, together with photos as well as annexed tables listing remaining land to be addressed.
22. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the information provided in the request and subsequently in responses to the Committee’s questions is comprehensive, complete and clear. The Committee noted that the plan presented by Sudan is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the progress of implementation. The Committee further noted that the plan’s success is contingent on access to the remaining contaminated areas that are dependent upon improved security and progress of political dialogue, the need for stable national funding and the mobilisation of international financial resources, engagement with international stakeholders and the creation of an environment conducive for organizations involved in mine action activities. In this regard, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Sudan reporting annually to the States Parties on the following:
 - (a) Progress on land release relative to the commitments given in Sudan’s annual work plan, disaggregating outputs in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards, including consistent disaggregation between explosive hazards destroyed;
 - (b) Updated information on mine survey assessments, related survey and deployment of clearance capacities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, including the identification of new mined areas, and their impact on annual targets as given in Sudan’s work plan;

- (c) Regular updates on changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively affect implementation;
- (d) Updated information on the review of Sudan's national mine action Strategy and National technical Standard and Guidelines, including a clear timeline for the development of these processes and updates on 'data clean-up' efforts;
- (e) Updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts within the new Strategic plan, including resources made available by the Government of Sudan and external financing received to support implementation efforts and the effects of the funding level on the implementation of the work plan;
- (f) Updates regarding the structure of Sudan's mine action program, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion.

23. The Committee noted the importance, in addition to Sudan reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping 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.