
**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**

19 November 2015

Original: English

Fourteenth Meeting

Geneva, 30 November-4 December 2015

Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda

**Operation and status of the Convention. Presentation,
reporting, discussion and decision with regard to:**

**Conclusions and recommendations related to the mandate
of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation**

**Analysis of the request submitted by Ethiopia 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
(Ecuador, Ireland, Poland and Zambia)**

1. Ethiopia ratified the Convention on 17 December 2004. The Convention entered into force for Ethiopia on 1 June 2005. In its initial transparency report submitted on 5 July 2008, Ethiopia reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Ethiopia is obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 June 2015. Ethiopia reported that it would require an extension of its 1 June 2015 deadline. Ethiopia did not submit a request for consideration and did not participate in the 23-27 June 2014 Third Review Conference, the last formal meeting of the States Parties prior to its deadline.
2. On 3 December 2014 the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation wrote to Ethiopia, reminding Ethiopia of the process established by the States Parties to address requests for extension and requesting Ethiopia to submit its extension request as soon as possible and no later than 31 March 2015. Ethiopia submitted its request for extension to the Committee Chair on 15 June 2015. On 25 August 2015, the Committee wrote to Ethiopia to request additional information. Ethiopia provided a response to the Committee's questions on 26 September 2015. Ethiopia's request is for 5 years (until 1 June 2020).
3. The Committee noted that Ethiopia had not adhered to the extension request process established by the States Parties in 2007. The Committee further noted that in addition to this, Ethiopia had submitted its request later than the established 31 March 2015 deadline for States Parties submitting requests in 2015. The Committee, however, noted with satisfaction that Ethiopia had submitted its request and has engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee, including by meeting with the Committee on the margins of the Convention's 25-26 June 2015 Intersessional Meetings.



4. The request indicates that:

(a) During the period of November 2001-April 2004 the Ethiopian Landmine Impact Survey (ELIS) was carried out and provided the first nationwide baseline data. The Request indicates that the ELIS identified a total of 1,916 suspected hazardous areas measuring 2,443,116,287 square meters. The request indicates that while the ELIS did not offer concrete information on the level of contamination in Ethiopia, it provided a baseline for Ethiopia to begin acquiring additional information on its anti-personnel mine problem. The request further indicates that the huge areas identified as contaminated were related to the size of the communities and not those of specific mined areas, overestimating the amount of contamination and requiring additional costly survey efforts;

(b) The Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO), with the support of a number of donors and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) has carried out efforts to confirm the results of the ELIS and carry out mine clearance throughout the country. The request indicates that in 2007 the EMAO organized Technical Survey or Rapid Response Teams (TS/RRT) to undertake a nation-wide technical survey to review and determine the landmine-impacted areas identified by the ELIS with a higher degree of accuracy. The request indicates that by 2009, the technical survey had provided accurate data concerning landmine impacted areas and provided the EMAO with essential updated baseline data on landmine contamination;

(c) Over the period of 2002-2012 a total of 59,629,754 square meters were cleared, 1,190,317,900 square meters were cancelled and a total of 8,191,437 square meters of new area was confirmed and cleared by TS/RRT teams leading to the detection and destruction of 9,260 anti-personnel mines, 1,466 anti-tank mines and 197,985 items of unexploded ordnance. The request also indicates that of the 1,916 suspected hazardous areas, 259 areas were released through General Survey, 1,207 areas were confirmed to be free of mines through technical survey and an additional 136 areas were confirmed to contain mines through technical survey.

5. The Committee noted that a nation-wide non-technical and technical survey enabled Ethiopia to collect the information necessary to garner a clearer understanding of the true remaining extent of the challenge. The Committee also noted that it was positive that the work carried out by Ethiopia led to significant reduction in the size of the suspected hazardous areas.

6. The request indicates that efforts have been carried out through the employment of National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) and Standard Operating Procedures which, with the support of NPA, have been updated in accordance with amendments to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The request indicates that operations have been carried out employing quality assurance and quality control efforts to ensure that operations are carried out in accordance with Ethiopia's NMAS and IMAS. The request also indicates that monitoring and evaluation was a crucial management tool used by EMAO and that skilled quality assurance personnel were involved in all clearance and post clearance stages of operations.

7. The Committee noted that Ethiopia may benefit from 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 the United Nations' IMAS, are in place and applied for the full and expedient implementation of the Convention. The Committee further noted the importance of Ethiopia continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with commitments made by the States Parties by providing information disaggregated by release through clearance, reduced through technical survey and cancelled through non-technical survey.

8. The request indicates that in 2012 the Ethiopian Government dissolved the EMAO by decree and that the remaining tasks was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry

of Defence Combat Engineers Main Department (CEMD) for the following key reasons:(a) the remaining mined areas will be more easily reachable to the Ministry of National Defence than to the civilian mine action program; (b) with demining resources and donations diminishing, the Ministry of National Defence will be in a better position to budget for operations, and; (c)the available capacity will be in better use by the Ministry of National Defence, as Ethiopian forces are widely involved in peacekeeping operations in so many countries.

9. The Committee asked Ethiopia to provide more detailed information on the configuration of the structure in place to carry out ex-EMAO functions. Ethiopia indicated that the structure was established under the National Defense Engineering Main Department as one Independent Mine Action Office and includes a number of departments including Operations, Mine Risk Education, IMSMA, Quality Assurance and Training. Ethiopia further indicated that efforts to carry out survey and clearance are carried out by a Demining Company, Technical Survey and EOD Teams and a Mechanical clearance team.

10. The request indicates that the remaining challenge amounts to 314 suspected hazardous areas measuring 1,193,168,623 square meters located in 6 regions of the country (Afar, Benshangul Gumz, Gambela, Oromia, Somali and Tigray) and that only 0.5 per cent of these areas are expected to be confirmed as mined areas requiring clearance.

11. The Committee asked Ethiopia to address minor discrepancies concerning the number of areas and amount of area to be addressed during the extension period and to disaggregate the information according to suspected and confirmed hazardous areas. The Committee also asked Ethiopia to address discrepancies concerning the percentage of this remaining challenge that is expected to be addressed through means other than clearance. Ethiopia informed the Committee that discrepancies in the request are due to typographical errors as well as errors in terminology use and that the remaining challenge includes 314 suspected hazardous areas measuring 1,193,168,623 square meters including confirmed and suspected areas in Tigray, Afar, Benshangul and Somali regions. Ethiopia further indicated that there were “suspended” minefields in Tigray and Benshangul measuring 753,000 square meters. Ethiopia provided a list of suspended areas that contain mines. Ethiopia further indicated that, given past experience, it expects the remaining contamination to be decreased and new mined areas located during survey and clearance operations.

12. The request also indicates that remaining contamination does not include the area along the Ethiopian-Eritrean confrontation border which remains unsurveyed and is currently unsafe to enter. The request further indicates that this area was under the control of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)and no survey was carried out and that this situation is compounded by the fact that the border is not demarcated on the ground and security issues persist.

13. The Committee asked Ethiopia that, as the remaining contamination indicated by Ethiopia in its request does not include the area along the Ethiopian-Eritrea confrontation border and that as this area remains unsafe to enter, what possible steps could Ethiopia take to fulfil Article 5 provisions in this area. Ethiopia informed the Committee that Ethiopia has cleared behind their defence lines but that between the two defence lines it is not possible to enter. Ethiopia indicated that clearance will be carried out once demarcation has been completed.

14. The request indicates that there have been significant socioeconomic gains made since entry into force as a result of Article 5 implementation with over 2 million people having benefited from mine clearance activities over the years including through the resettlement of people displaced by the conflict, infrastructure reconstruction and repair, release of land for productive use increasing food security and agricultural development, contribution to peace and security of previously conflict affected regions, amongst others.

15. The Committee on Article 5 Implementation noted that completion of Article 5 implementation during the requested extension period has the potential of making a significant additional contribution to improving human safety and socioeconomic conditions in Ethiopia.

16. The request indicates that mine clearance activities on the Tigray border minefields were suspended due to insecurity for civilian deminers but that it is possible to clear the minefields through “military humanitarian demining operations”. The request also indicates that the Afar, Somali and Oromia mined areas presented a particularly challenge due to the insecurity, lack of social services, their remote location and difficulty to access. The request further indicates that Gambela and Benshangul also present technical and logistical challenges due to, amongst others, the lack of infrastructure and the fact that the population in these areas are semi pastorals.

17. The request indicates the following as impeding circumstances: (a) some of the suspected and known mined areas located in border and remote areas are, due to insecurity, are inaccessible to civilian demining staff; (b) mined areas are located in unfriendly remote areas with harsh climate where there is an absence of basic social services for the supply of basic needs (e.g. shelter, water, medical, infrastructure etc.); (c) limited operations due to the continuous deployment of demining teams in scattered minefield areas and absence of funds; (d) a number of new hazards discovered outside of ELIS data; (e) lack of precise knowledge about the number and location of all areas contaminated by landmines, and; (f) three months out of the year mine action more or less comes to a stop because of heavy rain in most parts of Ethiopia and the lack of suitable roads and other infrastructure making it impossible for the teams to carry out their operations and reach hazardous areas during the rainy season.

18. As noted, Ethiopia’s request is for 5 years (until 1 June 2020). The request indicates that the remaining areas will be reduced and freed through land release techniques. The request indicates that during this timeframe Ethiopia will seek to: solicit and acquire the support of international advisors to train EOD, QA and IMSMA experts that will carry out data verification; provide training and capacity building to demining teams, Rapid Response Teams and EOD teams; fully equip Rapid Response Teams and EOD teams; complete the work of the Demining Training Centre left unfinished by Ex-EMAO; complete survey and clearance of the remaining mined areas, and; clear out data in NG IMSMA. The request indicates that humanitarian demining basic refreshment courses were held from 15 July-30 September 2015.

19. The request indicates that with the responsibility of meeting Ethiopia’s obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention lying within the CEMD, the CEMD plans to run an advanced Technical Survey by TS/RRT teams to confirm the exactly location of mined areas and releasing these areas employing land release procedures to minimize clearance to confirmed areas. The request indicates that from 1 December 2015 until the end of May 2020 four demining companies and 4 Rapid Response Teams will start the clearance and surveying of the contaminated regions. The request indicates that the following yearly milestones are expected:

2015

- Demining course training and establishment of RRT and EOD teams;
- Development and updating of mine action standards and mine clearance and land release standard operating procedures and integration within the updated IMAS;
- Deployment of 4 demining companies to the regions of Somali, Tigray and Oromia;
- Deployment of 4 teams of TS/RRT teams to Afar, Gambela and Benshangulu;

- Initiation of revisit to all registered areas in December 2015 to update current information in the database (to be completed by the end of 2017);
- Address approximately a total of 452,890 square meters through non-technical survey and technical survey and a total of 28,098,439 square meter through clearance.

2016

- Continue operations by the 8 teams throughout the region;
- Deployment of 4 TS/RRT teams to Afar, Gambela, Oromia, Benshangul and in Somali counties to conclude survey to more precisely define areas for clearance;
- Address approximately a total of 515,171,855 square meters through non-technical and technical survey and a total of 4,881,052 square meters through clearance.

2017

- Continue working with the 4 demining companies in Somali regions and 1 TS/RRT team to clear Gambela region while the rest of TS/RRT teams deploy to conclude survey in Somali Region;
- Address a total of 647,810,293 square meters through non-technical and technical survey and a total of 4,801,597 square meters through clearance;
- Submit by April 2017 an updated work plan to the States Parties based on a clear picture of the remaining contaminated areas.

2018-2020

- Clearance will continue in surveyed areas mainly in Somali Region.

20. The Committee asked Ethiopia for an update on activities that were to be carried out in the first 4 months of 2015. Ethiopia indicated that deminers received their basic combat engineering training on how to deal with different anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines and different types of explosives as well as how to demolish mines and other objects. Ethiopia also indicated that the Technical Survey teams have received a basic course of how to demolish isolated mines & UXO. Ethiopia indicated that the Demining Company's training started in September 2015 and includes training in demining drills and Standards of Operation Procedures (SOP) according the IMAS. Ethiopia further indicated that the Technical Survey Teams are going to get the refreshment training on the Survey procedures and land release process and that Ethiopia requires technical support in updating the standards and procedures of the demining company and Technical Survey/RRT and EOD teams.

21. The request indicates that Ethiopia projects that it will require approximately US\$37.1 million to clear all remaining suspected areas in all six regions of Ethiopia (US\$26.2 million for clearance, US\$1.8 million for quality assurance and information management, US\$7.4 million for training and equipment to manage residual issues and US\$5.6 million for coordination and administration). The request further indicates that along with security, funding is a major concern and all plans are based on adequate funding to the programme and that at present only the National Defence Combat Engineering Main Department's demining companies will work in Ethiopia and it is hoped that other international NGOs will come to Ethiopia to provide technical support, material and funds.

22. The Committee noted that given the importance of external support to ensure timely implementation, Ethiopia could benefit from developing as soon as possible a resource mobilization strategy that takes into account, as is implied by the extension request, the

need to reach out to donors. The Committee also noted that Ethiopia would benefit from outreach to international mine action operators or advisors in order to take advantage of the latest survey methods, equipment and lessons learned on land release as well as to access additional sources of international funding.

23. The request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request such as detailed tables listing the status, location and size of each area in question, specifications regarding steps taken to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas, data on the beneficiaries of mine risk education and annual data on new victims.

24. The Committee noted that the plan presented by Ethiopia lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the pace of implementation. The Committee also noted that the plan is ambitious and that its success is contingent upon the findings of survey efforts, stable funding, and challenges posed by the security situation. In this regard, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Ethiopia reporting annually to the States Parties on the following:

(a) Progress made relative to the commitments contained in section 14 of its extension request;

(b) Outcomes of survey efforts and how additional clarity obtained may change Ethiopia's understanding of the remaining implementation challenge;

(c) Updated information on remaining contamination disaggregated in terms of suspected hazardous areas and confirmed hazardous areas in line with the International Mine Action Standards;

(d) Update on the development of plans to carry out survey activities on the Eritrean/Ethiopian border;

(e) Resource mobilization efforts and external financing received and resources made available by the Government of Ethiopia to support implementation, and efforts to attract international mine action operators or advisors to offer technical support to Ethiopia;

(f) Changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively affect implementation.

25. In recalling that the implementation of Ethiopia's national demining plan will be affected by the results of survey operations, the level of resources obtained, changes in the security environment, and the amount of external or internal capacity involved in survey and clearance, and in noting that Ethiopia has provided a detailed work plan in its request up until the end of 2017, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Ethiopia submitting to the States Parties, by 30 April 2017, an updated detailed work plan for the remaining period covered by the extension containing an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas and how much area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request and a detailed budget.

26. The Committee noted the importance of Ethiopia keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of progress in fulfilling the commitments noted above as well as other pertinent developments regarding Ethiopia's implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request.