

Decisions on the Request Submitted by United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for an Extension of the Deadline for Completing the Destruction of Anti-Personnel Mines in Accordance with Article 5 of the Convention¹

28 November 2008

26. At its final plenary session, taking into account the analyses presented by the President of the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties of the requests submitted under article 5 of the Convention and the requests themselves, the Meeting took the following decisions:

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- xxiii. The Meeting assessed the request submitted by United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for an extension of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with article 5.1. While a number of substantive concerns were raised, the meeting decided to grant the request for an extension until 1 March 2019, taking into account the following considerations:
- xxiv. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland reaffirmed its commitment to clear or ensure the clearance of all anti-personnel mines in all mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland clarified its understanding that the obligations under article 5 fell to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- xxv. The Meeting further noted that, instead of undertaking the projected trial phase, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported that it will proceed immediately with the clearance of three mined areas, though the timescale for completing this clearance has yet to be determined with certainty.
- xxvi. The Meeting noted that although some humanitarian demining was undertaken immediately following the conflict, no demining had taken place to date since entry into force of the Convention. The Meeting noted that it is unfortunate that after almost ten years since entry into force a State Party is unable to specify how remaining work will be carried out and a timescale of the overall project.
- xxvii. The Meeting took note of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's confirmation that scenario 5 of the Field Survey which forms part of the Feasibility Study attached to the extension request serves as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Government's indicative Clearance Plan, containing clear priorities, timeframes for action and projected milestones for clearance over the period of the extension and as such formed a basis for future work. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland agreed to

¹ Excerpts from the Final Report of the 24 November – 28 November 2008 Ninth 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, United Nations Document # APLC/MSP.9/2008/4.

provide as soon as possible, but not later than 30 June 2010 a detailed explanation of how demining is proceeding and the implications for future demining in order to meet the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's obligations in accordance with articles 5.4. b) and c) of the Convention, including the preparation and status of work conducted under national demining programs and financial and technical means available.

- xxviii. The meeting noted that the Convention as a whole would benefit if the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the context of reporting on the progress on destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with article 5, provided clarity on a schedule for fulfilling its obligation under article 5.1 as soon as possible. The Meeting noted the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's undertaking to provide, in addition to article 7 requirements, regular reports on the following elements: establishment of a National Mine Action Authority and other implementation bodies; establishment of the necessary regulatory framework; progress on contracts let and budgets made available; progress in clearance; Environmental, ecological and technical assessments undertaken.
- xxix. The meeting took note that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will keep under annual review the possibility of reducing the time necessary to fulfill its obligations. A number of States Parties expressed the wish that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland proceed with the implementation of article 5 much faster than suggested by the amount of time requested.
- xxx. While granting this request, the Meeting noted the obligation of a State Party to include in its extension request a detailed explanation of the reasons for the proposed extension in accordance with articles 5.4.b) and c), such as status of work under a national demining program and financial and technical means available to the state party for the destruction of all anti-personnel mines. The Meeting also noted the importance of a State Party normally requesting only the time period necessary to understand the true remaining extent of its challenge and develop plans accordingly that precisely project the amount of time that will be required to complete article 5 implementation.

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27. Also in the context of considering the submission of requests under article 5 of the Convention, the Meeting noted that many of the States Parties that had submitted requests for extensions had highlighted the importance of obtaining resources in order to implement the plans contained in their requests. The Meeting encouraged requesting States Parties, as relevant, to develop as soon as possible resource mobilisation strategies that take into account the need to reach out to a wide range of national and international funding sources. The Meeting furthermore encouraged all States Parties in a position to do so to honour their commitments to fulfilling their obligations under article 6.4 of the Convention to provide assistance for mine clearance and related activities.

28. Also in the context of considering the submission of requests under article 5 of the Convention, the Meeting noted that the accounting of the remaining mined areas contained in many extension requests would serve as a foundation for a resource mobilisation strategy and greatly assist both requesting States Parties and all others in assessing progress in implementation during the extension period. The Meeting encouraged those requesting States Parties that have not yet done so to provide an accounting of annual milestones of progress to be achieved during extension periods. The Meeting furthermore encouraged all States Parties whose requests had been considered by the Ninth Meeting to provide updates relative to their accounting of remaining mined areas and/or annual benchmarks for progress at meetings of the Standing Committees, at the Second Review Conference and at Meetings of the States Parties.
29. Also in the context of considering the submission of requests under article 5 of the Convention, the Meeting warmly welcomed the report presented by the President of the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties on the process for the preparation, submission and consideration of requests for extensions to Article 5 deadlines, as contained in document APLC/MSP.9/2008/WP.35, and agreed to encourage States Parties, as appropriate, to implement the recommendations contained therein.