

## Peru

### **Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

#### **Revised Executive Summary<sup>1</sup>**

**3 July 2008**

Two key situations led to landmines being sown throughout Peru's national territory. The first arose from the need for the government to protect key national infrastructure being targeted by terrorists during the internal conflict of the 1980's and 1990's. The second situation stems from the emplacement of mines by the Peruvian Army along its northern border with Ecuador as a result of the 1995 undeclared war between the two countries in the region of the Condor mountain range.

Emplaced mines have had severe socio-economic consequences for the populations living in affected areas. The remoteness of these areas makes it difficult to produce exact figures concerning the number of victims claimed by landmines. However, to date, 315 persons are registered as landmine victims with 50 having lost their lives and 265 having been mutilated and disabled.

Apart from physical damage, these mines have affected herders and farmers in the interior of the country. In the Amazon jungle, the presence of landmines has hampered the return of land traditionally used for hunting and gathering by native populations, forcing them to go further into the forest for their livelihood. Landmines have also complicated the communication between families belonging to the same ethnic group who traditionally traveled regularly across the border and are now not able to do so without confronting the risk of landmines. This obstacle to transit by the population of the region also limits the exchange of traditional goods and services between groups on both sides of the border which has further impacted the economic dynamic of the population.

Against this background, Peru maintains its international commitments to release existing mined areas and suspected areas within its territory since the ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. On 13 December 2002, the Government of Peru passed Supreme Decree No. 113-2002-RE creating and establishing the Peruvian Mine Action Center. The government of Peru has consistently provided financially and in-kind support for demining operations while parallel efforts have been made to guarantee financing from the international donor community through its regional partner, the Organization of American States, through its Mine Action Program, as well as bilaterally. In addition, the Government decided to create special units within the Army and Police Force to be responsible for humanitarian demining operations.

It is noteworthy to comment that the area most affected is the border region with Ecuador. Thus, bilateral agreements between both countries became imperative. Joint demining operations between the armies of Peru and Ecuador have been highlighted and prioritized by the Presidents of Peru and Ecuador. During the last two meetings, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> This executive summary replaces the executive summary contained in the request received 28 March 2008.

and Defense of Peru and Ecuador agreed on the importance of demining efforts. During the Meeting of National Mine Action Authorities of Peru and Ecuador, which took place last May, issues related to operational parts of demining operations were discussed. Moreover, it was agreed to jointly prepare for a donor round table to be held in September, to call for further international cooperation.

To date, Peru has put forth a number of efforts to reduce the contaminated areas around its national infrastructure as well as along its border with Ecuador

#### National Infrastructure:

- In terms of its national infrastructure initial information indicated that there were 2,528 hazardous areas totaling an area of 1'020,067 square meters. These objectives include 2,518 high-tension electrical towers (1'105,419 square meters), 3 maximum security prisons (11,167 squared meters), 2 police bases (area unknown), other high tension electrical towers, transmission antennae, and one electrical substation. Approximately 92,623 mines are sown in these areas.
- Since 1998 to 2003 the Peruvian Government has cleared all 2,518 high-tension electrical towers culminating in the destruction of 81,917 antipersonnel mines. However, due to 4 mine accidents which occurred after clearance in 2003 and the fact that these clearance operations were not certified by the Peruvian Mine Action Center the decision was made to repeat clearance operations in 1,711 high-tension towers.
- From December 2004 to February 2008 reclearance has been carried out in 1,681 high-tension electrical towers destroying 203 antipersonnel mines and 3,409 unexploded ordnances (UXO).
- In December 2004 three antipersonnel mines were destroyed in an area of 13,000 square meters corresponding to the fenced area around the Ventanilla thermoelectric power plant in a neighborhood in the suburbs of Lima.

#### Border with Ecuador:

- In terms of the landmines on the border with Ecuador, initial information indicated that there were 69 mined areas totaling an area of 491,015 square meters. Approximately 30,806 mines were sown in these areas.
- From January to April 1999, 439 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in three demined areas totalling 82,410 square metres: Guepi, Cuzumaza–Bumbuiza and Yaupi–Santiago.
- From 1999 to 2000, 963 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in an area where a new road will be built from the Peru–Ecuador border to Tiwinza. An area of approximately 202,905 square metres was swept for mines.
- With the support of Canada, Japan, the United States of America and the Organization of American States, 199 anti-personnel mines were destroyed between July and November 2001 in the International Canal of the Zarumilla river, thus clearing an area of 13,000 square metres.
- In 2003, clearance operations were completed for 28 targets in Tumbes and Piura departments in an estimated area of 19,694 square metres. No anti-personnel mines were located. Humanitarian demining operations were carried out with the Ecuadorean Army.
- In July 2006, joint clearance operations were carried out with Ecuador in the vicinity of the Chira River on the common border, in an area of 1,037 square metres; 2 anti-personnel mines were destroyed.

- In September 2006, the Peruvian Army launched a technical survey on the Chiqueiza watchtower, in the surrounding areas of boundary marker 139 in the Cordillera del Cóndor. There are some 1,500 anti-personnel mines to be destroyed by joint efforts with the Ecuadorean Army.
- The Peruvian Army continued its humanitarian demining operations in Chiqueiza until February 2008, destroying 121 anti-personnel mines.
- To date, 34 areas have been cleared totaling an area of 319,046 square meters.

Humanitarian demining in Peru is carried out according to national procedures contained in the manual *Humanitarian Demining Procedures of the Republic of Peru*. These procedures which include general surveys, technical surveys, clearance and internal quality assurance activities, became effective in April 2004 and area based on the International Mine Action Standards that were adapted to reflect the situation in Peru. Once clearance is completed, internal quality assurance is carried out by demining squads that have not been involved in clearance operations so that the work can be certified by the Peruvian Mine Action Centre. Internal quality assurance operations are carried out according to national standards and procedures. The quality of operations is further assured through national and trained national monitors. National monitors monitor daily progress in the field and maintain complete record of daily activities which are then submitted to the national authority. The land is then certified as safe by the national authority, the Peruvian Centre for Mine Action.

In order to prevent civilians from entering affected high tension electrical towers, the affected areas have been fenced off and contain hazard signs pointing out the danger existing in the area. The mined areas around maximum security prisons are enclosed and feature hazard signs. The mined areas around police bases were initially enclosed by fences, but due to meteorological conditions and lack of funds to maintain the fencing, most of the fencing has fallen down. Concerning the mined areas on the border with Ecuador, there is only one protective fencing installed that is not apply to or secure the other 34 mined areas characterized by difficult geographical conditions and extreme weather. One of the main measures taken to prevent civilian accidents is through mine risk education campaigns carried out by the Peruvian Mine Action Centre in cooperation with other organizations. These campaigns employ all art forms to convey the message about the danger of anti-personnel mines, aimed principally at primary and secondary school students, teachers, parents and community leaders in towns near the mined areas.

To date, the Government of Peru and the international community has invested a great number of resources to establish the humanitarian demining capacity of Peru and to carry out humanitarian demining operations. Investment in clearance efforts have totalled US\$ 8'030,856 with US\$ 4'943,336 having been invested by the Government and the remainder by the international donor community basically through the Organization of American States' Mine Action Program and also bilaterally.

The remaining contamination problem within the county is significant. Within the national territory there are 846 mined areas including high tension towers (837), transmission antennae (3), electrical substation (1), maximum security penal institutions (3), and police bases (2). The total remaining area surrounding national infrastructure is 334,667 squared meters. Along the national border with Ecuador there are still a total of 35 mined areas that require clearance comprising an area of 192,061 squared meters. There area an estimated 29,084 landmines sown in these border areas.

There are a number of circumstances which have impeded the fulfilment of Peru's Article 5 obligations in the 10 year period allotted by the Convention. The main circumstances that have impeded progress are the followings:

Transportation and communication infrastructure: there are no means of access such as paved roads to the mined areas. On the northern border with Ecuador river transportation is practical but is only possible when the river is high. Since there are no roads or reliable means of transport, it is necessary to establish an alternate efficient and effective means of medical evacuation which must be available at all times in the area of operations. Aerial transportation by helicopter is the ideal means of transportation but has high operating and maintenance costs, considerably raising the cost of humanitarian demining. Additionally, communication networks are not very effective in the jungle, making it necessary to use powerful radios or satellite telephones.

Meteorological conditions: the Andean mountain range and ocean currents have an effect on the variation in atmospheric condition from one region to another. The seasons are marked by precipitations. In the sierra, winter, from October to May, is the rainy season. In the Amazon jungle it is hot and humid all year around. A mayor problem is the *El Niño* phenomenon which perturbs the country's weather, particularly in areas where humanitarian demining operations are taking place.

Geography: Peru's geography is varied with microclimates throughout the country. There are marked differences in the coast, mountain and jungle areas. Humanitarian demining operations in the high tension towers are carried out at 2,000 to 2,500 meters above sea level up to 4,000 meters above sea level, coupled with temperatures circulating between 10 °C and 20 °C below Zero. The terrain is also irregular, with peaks, deep creeks and gorges, mainly in the high Andean mountains. These conditions, in addition to problems caused by changes in altitude (lack of oxygen), the cold and the challenge of reaching the areas hinder progress.

Along the border with Ecuador progress is hindered by a huge expanse of dense vegetations, divided into the high jungle and lowland jungle, with badlands and hard to reach creeks, fast-running rivers and heavy precipitation.

The 35 mined areas of the Peruvian jungle are located at an average of 500 to 1,500 metres above sea level. In the Cordillera del Cóndor mined areas reach 2,500 to 3,500 metres above sea level; this area contains the largest number of anti-personnel mines in Peru. The climate is varied, with temperatures exceeding 35°C with constant humidity and rains nearly all year round.

Financing: With regard to demining operations on the border with Ecuador, the Peruvian Government has been allocating its own resources from the second half of 2006 for this kind of work, excluding wages for deminers, military infrastructure, pre-existing equipment and available services. This situation has not allowed a sustainable development of operations, and the Government had to depend, as it did between 2000 and 2005, on resources provided by the international donor community.

The National Police faces similar budget problems with regard to humanitarian demining in the national infrastructure. Nevertheless, other options were sought to obtain resources. The development model of partnerships with public or private enterprise has become an interesting option. Owing to the danger represented by anti-personnel mines in their areas of interest, commercial companies are willing to finance these operations. In this manner, the Peruvian Centre for Mine Action has sought to reconcile its interest in protecting the population and

prevent accidents with that of commercial companies. Aid and assistance from countries and international organizations to bolster national efforts aimed at certifying that Peru is free of mines are also important.

*Rotation of personnel:* The rotation of skilled personnel, in accordance with the yearly priorities of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, are also a hindrance to complying with proposed annual plans and established time frames, since it is necessary to re-train the personnel; time and experience are needed to consolidate the humanitarian demining process.

In light of the above circumstances and considering the quantitative and qualitative problem which remains, the Government of Peru decided that the initial deadline for the destruction of anti-personnel mines in its territory could not be met until 1 March 2019.

With regard to the impact that landmines have on the people living near dangerous areas, it is important to highlight that due to weather conditions and the physical properties of the weapons in question, antipersonnel mines can become dislodged and move from their original location to a new location that might eventually have more traffic, posing a serious threat to their lives and physical integrity. In the past, accidents were suffered by both Peruvians and Ecuadorians in the jungle. In the interior of the country, there have been various accidents involving children who work as shepherds when they tried to avoid that their animals stray near the danger of antipersonnel landmines placed to protect high-tension electrical towers.

In order to fulfill the commitments enshrined in the Ottawa Treaty (Article 5), the Government of Peru must undertake the following steps:

- Create a demining training center to provide training and re-training to new deminers;
- Create additional demining teams to allow the execution of faster demining operations;
- Have a helicopter on stand-by at all times to assure medical evacuation service in special situations, as well as the transportation of deminers to remote jungle areas.

It is estimated that the fulfillment of Article 5 obligations in Peru will cost a total of US\$ 17'944,207.00. It is expected that the Government of Peru will continue to finance the majority totaling US\$ 11'984,207.00. State funds will be complemented by funds provided by or obtained from other sources, such as the international donor community.