

Analysis of the request submitted by Yemen 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 President of the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions

14 November 2008

1. Yemen ratified the Convention on 1 September 1998. The Convention entered into force for Yemen on 1 March 1999. In its initial transparency report submitted on 28 August 1999, Yemen reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Yemen is obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 March 2009. Yemen, believing that it will be unable to do so by that date, submitted on 7 April 2008 to the President of the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties, a request for an extension of its deadline. On 18 April 2008, the President of the 8MSP wrote to Yemen to ask for clarifications on a number of points. Yemen provided a detailed response and subsequently, on 6 November 2008, Yemen submitted to the 8MSP President a revised request for an extension incorporating additional information provided in response to the President's questions. Yemen requests a six year extension (until 1 March 2015.)
2. The request indicates that a Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), completed in July 2000, identified a total of 1,078 mined areas with a reported surface area of 922,726,881 square metres, mainly in the central and southern regions of the country. The request further indicates that in 2002, 7 additional mined areas with a total size of 100,400 square metres were identified and that in 2006, 3 additional mined areas with a total size of 505,000 square metres were identified. Hence, in total 1,088 areas totalling 923,332,281 square metres have been of concern to Yemen.
3. The request indicates that of the 1,088 areas totalling 923,332,281 square metres have been of concern to Yemen, 631 areas totalling 710,103,911 square metres have been released. The request further indicates that a total of 201,514 explosive remnants of war have been destroyed, including 108,974 anti-personnel mines and that 457 areas totalling 213,228,369 square metres will remain to be addressed during the extension period. The request also indicates that of the original total of 923,332,281 square metres, 213,054,566.8 square metres have been "completed", 133,146,458.1 square metres have been "cancelled", 363,902,887.0 square metres are "ongoing" and 213,228,369.0 are "left".
4. The States Parties mandated to analyse requests submitted under Article 5 of the Convention (hereafter referred to as the "analysing group") noted that, while the 213,228,369.0 square metres of area that is "left" corresponds with what the request indicates remains to be addressed, ambiguity exists regarding that status of area referred to as "ongoing." The analysing group further noted that, while the request did not provide annual indications of progress, a significant amount of area had been released since 2000 from the original total that was of concern to Yemen.
5. As noted, Yemen's request is for six years (to 1 March 2015) on the basis of the Yemen Mine Action Centre's survey and clearance rates, which in turn are based on experience

to date, the number of available personnel, the type of terrain and mine fields, and a realistic expectation of financial resources. The request further indicates that it is intended that implementation should be completed in 2014. The analysing group noted that even though it is planned for all areas to be addressed by the end of 2014, the requested period would extend until 1 March 2015 to take into account Yemen's experience with how funding shortfalls have resulted in some past work being delayed.

6. The request indicates the following as impeding circumstances: (a) The combination of Yemen being one of the world's most mine affected countries and one of the poorest has affected implementation; (b) The amount of external funding required to complement Yemen's national contribution often has not kept pace with demands with shortages or delays in receiving funding having delayed work; (c) A lack of the latest demining technologies has been a factor in areas where the soil has a high iron content or where mines are deeply buried; and, (d) Yemen's geography and climate have challenged demining operations. The analysing group noted that it was unclear whether Yemen had overcome the technical challenges that have posed as impeding circumstances in the past.
7. The request indicates annual projections of the release of the 213,228,369 square metres or remaining area of concern through technical survey and clearance. It is projected that 199,232,908 square metres will be released by the end of 2009 as a result of technical survey and that 13,995,453 will be cleared between 2008 and 2014. The analysing group noted the large area, in absolute and percentage terms, that is anticipated to be released through means other than clearance.
8. The request indicates that Yemen uses technical survey to identify and verify the precise clearance task and that clearance is undertaken using, in accordance with international and Yemeni standards, manual methods, mine detection dogs and backhoe machines. The request further indicates that there are currently approximately 1,100 deminers working in the field and that in total the Yemen Mine Action Centre has 8 clearance units, 5 platoons, 1 backhoe operator, 7 explosive destruction teams, 5 mine risk education teams, 3 victim assistance teams, 27 medical support teams, 12 mine deduction dogs teams, 2 monitoring and inspection teams, 11 technical survey teams and 5 quality assurance teams. In addition, the request indicates that personnel working for Yemen's mine action programme are seconded from the military.
9. The request indicates that Yemen projects that implementation of Article 5 during the extension period will require US\$ 31,216,667, or an average of approximately US\$ 5.2 million per year between 2009 and 2014. The request further indicates that Yemen annually since 1999 has invested its own resources into humanitarian demining including through a relatively constant annual contribution valued at between US\$ 3.5 million and US\$ 3.7 million each year. The request further indicates that Yemen intends to invest similar amounts in each year from 2009 to 2014. The analysing group noted that Yemen's national contribution to implementing Article 5 has represented more than half of the total value of resources dedicated to implementation in Yemen.
10. The request indicates that between 2009 and 2014, US\$ 1,880,000 will be available from "other sources" and that in addition Yemen requires US\$ 10,495,000 million from donor countries. The analysing group remarked that the expectation of international support is consistent with the historical record of support received. The analysing group also noted, however, that the historic level of annual contributions has fluctuated in recent years and

that if this continues it would pose difficulties for Yemen in fulfilling its obligations in the manner outlined in the request.

11. The request indicates that some of the remaining mined areas are in Yemen's Hadramout governorate where there is a great potential for oil exploration and that completing implementation will remove a barrier to this important development initiative and help reduce Yemen's dependence on imported oil. The request further indicates that the remaining mines are blocking agricultural lands, irrigation sources and grazing areas. In addition, the request indicates that, with Yemen classified as one of the poorest countries in the region, clearance operations are expected to have a significant economic impact in poverty reduction. The analysing group noted that completion of Article 5 implementation during the requested extension period had the potential of making a significant contribution to improving human safety and socio-economic conditions in Yemen.
12. The request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request including a table containing the status and socio-economic characteristics of each area in question and tables providing detail on annual victim numbers and funding received.
13. The analysing group noted that the proposed six year extension seemed workable, although success in implementation is very much tied to securing donor support at a level that has historically been provided to Yemen. The analysing group further noted that, as stated by Yemen in its request, Yemen would be able to complete implementation by the end of 2014.
14. The analysing group noted that given the importance of external support to ensure implementation, Yemen's resource mobilisation efforts could benefit from communicating in more detail its strategic plan for implementation, including a breakdown of projected costs. Yemen may also wish to clarify whether means have been identified to overcome technical challenges that have impeded implementation to date.
15. The analysing group noted that the accounting of the remaining mined areas and the annual projections of progress provided by Yemen would greatly assist both Yemen and all States Parties in assessing progress in implementation during the extension period. In this regard, the analysing group noted that both could benefit if Yemen provided updates relative to this accounting of areas at meetings of the Standing Committees, at the Second Review Conference and at Meetings of the States Parties.