

**Statement on Turkey's Article 5 Extension Request, delivered by Mine Action Review  
Intersessional Meetings, 22–24 June 2021**

In the interests of time, Mine Action Review will focus our statement on key topics for attention and clarification.

- Turkey's extension request of 3 years and 9 months, up to 31 December 2025, is an interim request, during which Turkey plans to complete non-technical survey (NTS) of all mined areas, continue clearance, and prepare its final Article 5 request.

Turkey should only ask for the amount of time it needs to complete NTS and there is no reason to align to 31 December 2025, unless this is actual amount of time required to complete NTS.

It would be useful to see a timeline for the planned NTS.

- We welcome that in the previous phases of the Eastern Border demining project, a significant amount of mined area was reduced through technical survey.

It would be useful if Turkey can confirm that it intends to also conduct technical survey, where appropriate, during all land release operations conducting during the extension period including:

- Phase III of the Eastern Border operations;
- the Mardin Province mine clearance, due to be tendered;
- and, as part of clearance planning operations conducted by Turkey's military demining units.

- On page 11 of its Extension Request, Turkey reports that prior to TURMAC's establishment in 2015, some demining activities conducted solely by military demining units were cleared with a 90–95% mine detection/destroy rate and there was no quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) process in place providing handover of the contaminated area.

In these mined areas cleared solely by the military demining units and where there was an unacceptably low detection rate and no QA/QC, TURMAC must ensure that re-clearance/QC is conducted, to ensure that any anti-personnel mines missed previously are discovered and destroyed.

- It is a positive development that Turkey now refers to victim-activated IEDs as anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. We encourage Turkey to include all such devices in its annual reporting under Article 7 and in implementation of Article 5.
- Cross-border operations in northern Syria have put Turkey in effective control of territory contaminated by anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature. As per the provisions of the APMBC, any mined areas under Turkey's jurisdiction or control in Syria are included under Turkey's Article 5 obligations and should therefore be included in Turkey's Article 5 Extension Request.

- Turkey is also in effective control<sup>1</sup> of anti-personnel mined areas in northern Cyprus, which therefore also fall under its APMBC Article 5 obligations and should be included in Turkey's Article 5 Extension Request.

The Turkish Cypriot authorities in northern Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus should both comply with the UN Security Council's renewed call for access to all remaining mined areas within and outside the buffer zone.<sup>2</sup>

Both sides should collaborate with the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in developing a work plan to complete clearance of all known mined areas.

- Lastly, we would welcome comprehensive information on what steps Turkey plans to mainstream gender and diversity within its mine action programme.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> See the reference to Turkey's jurisdiction in northern Cyprus (under the European Convention on Human Rights) in European Court of Human Rights, *Güzelyurtlu and others v. Cyprus and Turkey*, Judgment (Grand Chamber), 29 January 2019, para. 193.

<sup>2</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2453 (2019), para. 17.