

Eritrea's Statement in the Meeting of the standing committee

9 – 11 April 2014

Geneva

Mr. Chairman

Delegates of States Parties

Representatives of Mine Action organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Having the strategic aspiration to see a mine free - state, the Government of Eritrea has been tackling to overcome the article 5 challenges of the Convention. Despite the lack of funds and shortage of operational equipments that impede our demining progress against the massiveness of the land mine impacted areas identified and recorded during the completion of the LIS project, huge and greater portion of the impacted locations are addressed within the past three years using the comprehensive tasks of demining and resurvey.

As indicated in our extension request paper submitted recently, the task which was carried out in the past 3 years, with foremost results, was the non technical survey method. From the total **73.7** million square meters progress accomplished in all the six regions within the 3 years period, over **67** million square meter area was verified and cancelled by non technical survey means while demining carried out in the four regions namely: Anseba, Debub, Semienawi Keih Bahri and Gash Barka covered about **5.7** million square meters.

Mr. Chairman,

Even though resurvey is not yet totally addressed as it was planned, we see the non-technical survey result as a significant progress which has enabled us to cancel a vast and greater portion of the 2004 LIS report when looked against the limited national resources.

In the recent months of 2014 significant progress is not registered in demining due to the fact that demining teams are not always confined in demining tasks only. Apart from demining, there are occasions where our teams participate in other outstanding development programs such as constructions, agricultural works and others. But currently, the Eritrean Government is reviewing and processing for a better coordination of the mine action team and progress of the program.

Mr. Chairman

On planning our objectives we always consider to meet the maximum possible opportunities and full availabilities of operational material and funding during the course of the planned period. However, owing to shortage of operational equipments and lack of adequate funding on one side and the unfortunate discovery of new contaminated areas on the other, the Government of the State of Eritrea requests five year extension period (February 2015 to February 2020) to fulfill its obligation under article 5 and to accomplish resurvey task so that to identify the lean actual mined area needing thorough demining operations

Resurvey for the remaining impacted areas during the requested extension period will effectively involve a non- technical and technical survey in all the remaining nationwide impacted areas (six regions). Consequently, according to our recommendations, areas given priority for clearance will also need priority in resurveys particularly those needing only technical survey. This plan also creates convenience of cooperation among the teams working adjacently. Locations given priority for demining and resurveys include:

Anseba region, sub regions Hagaz, Keren, Halhal, Geleb, Elaberid, Hamelmalo, Asmat, Kerkebet, Habero and Aditekelezan

Semienawi Keih Bahri region, sub regions: Karora, Mahmimet, Afabet, Shieb, Foro and Massawa

Maakel Region, Sub regions Serejeka, Gala Nefhi and Berik.

In this currently requested period, we further need to conduct resurveys that can be carried out parallel to the demining operations. So, having substantial transitional period, we will be able to gain more clarity which leads us to the right assessment

for the final report of the remaining contaminated area to be reported at the end of the requested period.

I thank you.