

**Comments on Niger's Article 5 Extension Request, delivered by Mine Action Review
Intersessional Meetings, 30 June – 2 July 2020**

Mine Action Review appreciates that Niger faces many challenges in fulfilment of its Article 5 implementation, including challenging conditions posed by environmental extremes, the remoteness of affected areas, and insecurity. But Niger has stated that the primary challenge hindering clearance efforts is lack of funding.

In order for Niger to effectively use its extension request as a means of helping mobilise the required international cooperation and assistance, Mine Action Review encourages Niger to provide greater detail and clarity in its extension request.

With regards to the extent of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination, while Niger refers in its extension request to mined area located in the northern part of the Agadez region, specifically near the Madama military base, no mention is made to the emerging threat of anti-personnel mines of improvised nature deployed by non-state armed groups in western border regions of Niger. Victim-activated IEDs that meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine are covered by the Treaty, and Niger should make every effort to identify any anti-personnel mine contamination of this nature and include it in its extension request.

In addition, in line with best practice and Oslo Action Plan commitments, the international community would also benefit from Niger providing:

- i) A detailed, costed, and multi-year work plan for the extension period, including annual survey and clearance targets, that donors could be invited to support;
- ii) a resource mobilisation strategy;
- iii) details of Niger's mine action capacity (trained deminers, information management, QA/QC capacity, national mine action standards);
- iv) plans for establishing a sustainable national capacity to address the discovery of previously unknown mined areas following completion (i.e. residual contamination);
- v) a commitment to providing annual updates through Article 7 reports and a revised workplan in 2022, midway through the requested extension period.

It has been challenging to accurately monitor Niger's progress in survey and clearance of mined areas since its third extension request was granted in 2016, as Niger has only submitted one Article 7 report, in the interim period (in 2018). We therefore welcome Niger reporting clearance of 18,483m² between July 2019 and February 2020. This modest outcome still represents progress after five years of extremely limited clearance previously, based on available sources.

Providing more detail and clarity, to support its fourth extension request, will help demonstrate national ownership and make it more likely that that the international cooperation and assistance needed by Niger to complete clearance of mined areas, will be made available.