

## GICHD remarks on APMC Article 5 extension request submitted by the Republic of South Sudan

Intersessional meeting of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention  
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The GICHD would like to congratulate the government of South Sudan on the development and submission of their recent Article 5 extension request. The GICHD believes that the request submitted is clearly structured and makes a logical case for the five year extension requested.

Contamination figures presented in the document show that South Sudan has made considerable progress in terms of Land Release in recent years. In particular a focus on Non-Technical Survey (NTS) and database clean-up has paid dividends and South Sudan should be commended for its efforts in this regard.

The completion plan included is appropriately detailed and is evidently based on a thorough analysis of the remaining contamination, as well as which tools will be the most appropriate to address the problem within the South Sudanese context. It is clear from the request that the security situation and reconfiguration of clearance teams are key preconditions for the achievement of the work-plan.

The GICHD is pleased to see that the South Sudanese government has developed its plan based on the assumption of lasting peace, which demonstrates confidence in the peace process, and is encouraging.

The fact that the request makes a number of references to South Sudan's obligations under the 2020–2024 Oslo Action Plan (OAP), demonstrates tangible commitment to the OAP from an affected state. This also sets a welcome precedent from one of the first affected States to submit an extension request since the OAP was adopted in November 2019.

The approach that has been taken to ensure that gender and diversity considerations are mainstreamed throughout the request is a good one. It is also gratifying to note that South Sudan has made efforts to ensure that; EORE and Community Liaison Teams are gender

balanced, important steps taken by operators is recognised, the different needs of women, girls, boys, and men in both clearance and risk education are understood, and that risk education materials are tailored to different community needs.

Given the operating context in country there might be value in including more detail on how other sensitive diversity factors such as ethnicity/religion/inter-communal factors are addressed by the NMAA and operators, including how any potential risks associated with this are managed.

In some cases the terminology used in the request would benefit from a review to ensure compliance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) this would help avoid any potential confusion, particularly over the detailed operational projections presented.

The GICHD would like to again commend the South Sudanese Mine Action Programme for the articulation of such a clear and credible Article 5 extension request, and to reaffirm its commitment to supporting South Sudan in its path to completion.