



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention 2020 Intersessional Meeting

30 June – 2 July 2020

Statement by the HALO Trust on the Article 5 Extension Request Submitted by Ukraine

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Many thanks Chair, and our thanks to the Committee for its work. HALO is happy to provide our reflections as part of the Article 5 process for countries where we have current programmes. As a member of the Clearing the Mines Advisory Board, HALO also aligns with the statement provided by Mine Action Review.

HALO would like to congratulate the Government of Ukraine for the submission of this interim Article 5 extension request. HALO recognises the many positive developments made in the Ukrainian mine action sector in recent years as well as the continued commitment to mine action by the Government of Ukraine. We also note that Ukraine's Article 5 obligations relate in part to areas under its jurisdiction but outside of its control.

HALO supports Ukraine's interim two-year extension request until 31 December 2023. This period should be used as an opportunity to develop an accurate baseline of contamination in areas of eastern Ukraine under government control. This can be used as a basis for a further and more detailed extension request after this period.

Ukraine should provide more detail on the calculations used to estimate remaining contamination in the government-controlled area of Ukraine. It should also disaggregate this data by contamination type, particularly anti-personnel landmine contamination.

We recognise that Ukraine has requested an extension because of contamination in areas not under its control in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. However, clearance is currently ongoing inside and outside of the buffer zone in the government-controlled areas. We would encourage Ukraine to provide more details within this extension request on its plan for clearance in areas under government control.

HALO has welcomed the adoption of a Law on Mine Action in December 2018 as a major milestone for the mine action sector in Ukraine. This Law will also enable the establishment of a National Mine Action Authority in Ukraine.

HALO also respectfully offers three concrete recommendations to the Government of Ukraine that we feel would enhance the effectiveness of mine action operations and the implementation of Article 5 obligations as soon as possible. First, Ukraine should ensure that the new National Mine Action Centres will promote the national application of sector best practices, reflecting the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

Second, national regulatory frameworks should be amended to permit civilian mine action entities to use explosives as part of humanitarian operations. Third, mine action NGOs should be exempt from Article 119 of the Ukraine Labour Law relating to staff salaries.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide input on Ukraine's extension request and HALO reaffirms its commitment to supporting Ukraine in its Article 5 implementation.

ENDS