

**Comments on Yemen's Extension Request  
Intersessional Meeting of the Mine Ban Treaty  
22-24 May 2019**



Yemen is one of the most sad and tragic stories – a country which was on track to soon become mine-free, today is gravely contaminated by landmines, primarily improvised mines, which have killed and maimed hundreds of civilians and prevented much-needed humanitarian aid. We are outraged by the widespread use of landmines by Houthi forces since 2017 and call for an immediate halt to use of this weapon, credible investigation and punishment of the perpetrators.

We recognize that the Yemen mine action program under YEMAC has been operating under extremely challenging circumstances and high pressure since the outbreak of the conflict, focusing on emergency mine action interventions and risk education. At the moment, the extent and precise locations of contamination in Yemen are unknown. However, by the number and locations of recorded casualties it seems to be very extensive.

Among positive points of the presented request:

- Since it is not in a position to determine the current extent of mine contamination, Yemen is rightly requesting a short interim extension of three years in order to re-establish its mine action program and get a clearer understanding of the scope and nature of the problem
- Yemen's plan seems to be logical - the principal planned activity will be a nation-wide non-technical survey aimed at establishing a new baseline which should allow the development of a realistic plan to address remaining contamination
- In addition, while continuing its ongoing mine action emergency response, as part of the 2020-23 plan, Yemen intends to strengthen its prioritization system, develop revised national mine action standards, strengthen the information management system, and establish a nation-wide mine action coordination body.

Among points that will require further clarification and follow-up:

- Considering the high number of casualties, it would be good if in its revised request, Yemen also presented a comprehensive plan on risk education (which YEMAC itself considers one of its two priority areas) and other efforts to ensure exclusion of civilians from mined areas

- It would be useful to learn more about plans for a new “Yemen mine action coordination body”, including on its intended role, composition and timelines for setting it up, as well as its relation to YEMAC
- It would also be useful to add a calendar to the presented work plan that would show clearly when and where specific activities would take place and who would carry them out
- There are some inconsistencies in the current budget. It would be useful if Yemen could provide more clarity on the amount of funding needed for the three-year period, as well as per year and per activity
- There is very little information in the document in regard to Yemen’s resource mobilization actions and plans. Yemen should provide more information on what it has done and intends to do to secure required funding
- Lastly, it would be useful if in the future YEMAC disaggregated data on mine and ERW clearance

We remain deeply concerned about the daily safety of communities and people in Yemen and share our sincere sympathy with all affected.

We appeal to all to put an immediate end to mine use, and to provide quick access to all affected areas, which should be marked, surveyed and cleared urgently.

Lastly, we thank YEMAC for its ongoing life-saving work and we ask the international community to provide all necessary assistance to support its efforts.