



**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA  
MINE ACTION CENTRE**

**ANTI - PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION  
INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS OF THE STATES PARTIES  
UPDATE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION**

Geneva, 22-24 May 2019

Distinguished delegates,

The delegation of the Republic of Serbia would like to use this opportunity to underline that the Republic of Serbia is strongly committed to the full implementation of its obligations from the Anti - Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which is shown by the fact that AP mines are no longer produced in Serbia and the stockpiled AP mines have been destroyed.

With regards to Serbia's Article 5 Implementation obligations, please note that Serbia is also committed to the fulfilment of its obligations.

At the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction, which was held in the period 26-30 November 2018, Geneva, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 4 year extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which is 1 March 2023.

Namely, due to the fact that Serbia has been facing a number of difficulties, such as the lack of adequate financial resources, and presence of areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs-rockets and other UXO in addition to mine contaminated areas, Serbia was in no position to meet their 2019 deadline and accordingly in March 2018, Serbia submitted a request for their deadline to be extended to 1 March 2023.

The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and had not been planted in specific patterns.

These are groups of mines, not minefields. On most of these areas deaths of humans or animals occurred or a mine was accidentally detected.

All these circumstances aggravate survey and clearance efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.

In 2019, the Government of Serbia has increased funds for demining operations to 350,000 EUR in comparison to 2015 when the available funds totalled 100,000 EUR, thus demonstrating that it has taken more ownership of the problem.

Since the 17<sup>th</sup> MSP held in November 2018, two clearance projects totaling 293,200 sqm were completed in December 2018 in the Municipality of Bujanovac, with 15 AP mines and 1,345 UXO found and safely destroyed.

These projects were funded by the 2018 Serbian State Budget for demining operations and, matched, through ITF Enhancing Human Security, with the US donation and the donation of the Republic of Korea. It has been the first time the Republic of Korea has financially supported demining operations in Serbia, and we are grateful and honored that they have continued to support us this year, too.

As of May 2019, the area in the Republic of Serbia suspected to contain anti-personnel mines totals 1,731,520 square metres. Area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines remains in the Municipality of Bujanovac.

Currently, tender procedures for the selection of a contractor for the demining project funded, through ITF, by the Governments of Japan and the USA are in progress.

We expect that the field works on this project totalling 389,200 square meters will commence in June this year.

This is the first time Japanese Government has earmarked funds for demining operations in Serbia. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation and are looking forward to continuation of our cooperation until the achievement of all set goals.

Furthermore, tender procedures for the selection of contractors for demining projects which will be financed by the available 2019 national funds matched, through ITF, with the donation of the USA and the Republic of Korea, are also in progress, and we expect the field works to commence, also, in June this year.

The Republic of Serbia will make all their efforts to complete the Article 5 obligations, in order to primarily provide safety of local population, safe exploitation of woods, safe use of road communications, environmental protection, as well as reduction of fire risks.

Serbia is making efforts to solve the problems related to mines and other explosive remnants of war and the Government, within its modest possibilities, allocates funds for demining operations, but given the extent of the problem of mines and other explosive remnants of war, this is not enough to solve the overall mine problem.

Namely, Serbia needs international funds and time to complete the task at hand. We are in its final phase as regards the mine clearance completion, and donors have the opportunity to be part of the completion process.

The dynamics of implementation of our demining projects might be affected by provision of funds, that is, if the funds for implementation of our projects are not provided, our plan will be directly affected and more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, if funds are provided, the work plan could be implemented in a shorter period.

In conclusion, the Republic of Serbia, as a member of the States Parties, is fully committed to comply with all the provisions of the Convention by ensuring the total clearance of all known mined areas in Serbia by 2023.

Thank you for your attention.