

## **Extension requests for mine clearance under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Convention**

### **ICRC comments on the DRC's request made to the analyzing group on 20 May 2011**

With regard to the extension request of the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, we would like to note the following.

The request filed by the Democratic Republic of Congo explains that it did not manage to clear all suspected mined areas in its original deadline because the first landmine impact survey overestimated the amount of mined areas and the various NGO's and demining operators, which carried out survey and clearance, did not use one centralized database to report the work done. From 2001 to 2010, the DRC cleared only 1.28 square km of suspected mined areas. Last year, important efforts were conducted to clean the database and create one centralized database. The work revealed that there are 82 mined areas left to clear, covering an area of 14.13 square km. Out of these 82 areas, 12 zones need to be cleared and the other 70 re-surveyed in order to clarify whether they really are suspected to contain mines. Recently, the DRC also started 2 general surveys, which it calls 'enquête générale de l'action contre les mines', which should allow the DRC to draw a more accurate and complete picture of the contamination suffered by the DRC by the end of 2012.

This request is an interim request, which will allow the DRC to clearly identify the total amount of contaminated areas in the country and to provide at the end of this interim period a clear and precise plan for clearance of these mined areas. The DRC believes that it needs 4 years to complete this initial work.

However, it does not seem to be entirely clear why the DRC needs 4 years to carry out this work. The request mentions that the general surveys, which started in 2009, should be concluded by the end of 2012. The request states that the re-survey of the 70 known mined areas will be carried out in 2013-2014 (p.48 of the request). It is therefore not clear why the DRC is asking until 2016. What is the work plan envisaged from 2014 to 2016? The DRC should provide a yearly plan of action or in other words a detailed breakdown of what sort of work will be carried out each year of the proposed extension request. The request would also be enhanced by providing more details on the various methods that the DRC plans to employ for its surveys and clearance during the time requested.

The DRC plans to fund these clearance activities through 1.5 million US dollars of its own money per year and to find 28.5 million US dollars through international contributions. The total budget per year has been estimated to amount to 30 million US dollars. We would suggest that the request should provide a detailed breakdown of the costs and a detailed allocation of funds together with a plan for resource mobilisation, as the suggested budget represents a doubling of the present demining budget in the DRC.

In conclusion, we believe that, in order to help the DRC to create a well prepared and financially viable clearance plan, the analyzing group should encourage the DRC to amend its original request. This amended request would provide the necessary details and clarifications and possibly revise the time requested with a view to shorten it.