

ICRC Statement

Chad's Extension Request

Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies

28 May 2013

The International Committee of the Red Cross would like to congratulate Chad for the steps it has taken in recent years toward meeting its Article 5 obligations. Chad has decided to effect fundamental structural changes in its mine action programme in an effort to overcome past problems. Since its last extension request, Chad has also taken measures to analyse the extent of contamination in detail and has managed to significantly reduce previous estimates.

In light of these efforts, it would greatly assist the States Parties if Chad could provide the detailed results of the technical surveys that were conducted with the support of the Mines Advisory Group (MAG). We would also encourage Chad to specify the estimated surface of mined areas, and clarify why the estimates of overall remaining contamination, as well as the estimated time required to complete clearance, differ substantially between the request and Chad's Mine Action Strategy 2013-2017. We hope that Chad will submit additional information on these aspects in the near future.

In regards to the work plan, the ICRC's supports Chad's decision to prioritize survey and clearance operations in the north of the country, given the particularly precarious situation of the populations living in these vast areas. The request should, however, have presented the planned number of mined areas and surface to be cleared per year, to help the States Parties, as well as the Centre National de Déminage (CND) itself, monitor future progress.

In addition, it would be very helpful if the work plan could demonstrate how Chad intends to overcome past challenges, including issues with transport and the management of information. Further details on the chosen clearance methods could also help satisfy the States Parties that Chad intends to deploy the most efficient clearance means possible in light of the difficult geographical conditions and the presence of low-metal mines.

In regards to funding, it is very positive that the Chad government has committed to making substantial financial contributions to support the fulfillment of its Article 5 obligations. The request could nevertheless benefit from more detailed explanation of the estimated additional funds required. A resource mobilization strategy could also be spelt out.

In the ICRC's view, the maintenance of international support is vital to ensuring an efficient mine clearance programme in Chad. Funds are urgently required to ensure ongoing UNDP technical support to the CND, to assist with coordination and management restructuring.

Similarly, sustained support to the MAG programme in Chad (which avoids the need for costly mobilization / demobilization to mined areas in the north of the country each time) is essential to maintaining the current momentum. The involvement of a second international operator, with an additional funding source, would also greatly help Chad to meet its Article 5 deadline in the shortest timeframe possible and we urge all States Parties in a position to do so to extend their support in this regard.