

ICRC Statement

Germany's Request for a Deadline

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

28 May 2013

The International Committee of the Red Cross commends Germany for submitting a request to the States Parties for a new clearance deadline in line with the commitments made at the 12MSP in relation to such exceptional situations. Germany has been transparent with the States Parties since it discovered this suspected mined area, which has now been more precisely defined as only 10,000m².

Given its relatively small size, it should be possible to clear this area quite quickly. According to technical advice we have received, if Germany opts for manual clearance, since metal detectors cannot be used, this task should take a maximum of 10 months.¹ If Germany opts for a mechanical solution, clearance should take as little as 2 days.² However, if the work is subjected to tender, we would expect the total time required to organise and award the tender, bring in equipment and personnel, do the actual clearance and quality control could be up to one year. The fact that Germany is able to fund the clearance itself should greatly assist.

Unless there are other factors of which we are unaware (including factors linked to the infrastructure projects, which have not been detailed in the request), we consider that Germany could deal with this area in less time than it has requested. We therefore encourage it to reduce the timeframe sought, for example, to 31 December 2014.

The ICRC also recommends that Germany submit to the States Parties as soon as possible the outcomes of the technical survey, which we have heard today is now scheduled for completion in autumn 2013, together with details of the remaining aspects of the infrastructure plan to be completed, as well as a plan for clearance of the mined area.

Finally, in light of the discovery of this mined area after the expiry of its Article 5 deadline, we urge Germany to continue to ensure that it has made every effort to identify any other mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, in accordance with Article 5(2) of the Convention.

¹ Calculation based on a manual demining study done by the GICHD, which showed the slowest rates for excavation as being 1,000 m² per platoon per month See: <http://www.gichd.org/lima/reports-publications/detail/publications/a-study-of-manual-mine-clearance/>, Table 4 (p.27).

² Based on a minimum of 1,000 m² cleared per hour x 5 hours per day (clearance rates for common demining machines).