

Ottawa Convention, Meeting of Standing Committee – 21.-25. June 2010, Geneva

Update on the Danish process of clearance of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention

Honorable Co-chairs and Co-rapporteurs, Distinguished Delegates, Dear colleagues

On behalf of the Government of Denmark my delegation would like to reiterate Denmark's full commitment to all obligations under the Ottawa Convention. Among the first countries to ratify the Ottawa Convention, Denmark has pledged itself to work towards securing a world free of anti-personnel mines.

Since 1992 Denmark has donated more than 300 million US \$ to mine action activities around the world; making Denmark among the ten largest donors in this field in absolute numbers. Denmark will continue to support and provide funding for mine action activities and continue to seek international coordination and cooperation within the UN, the EU, as well as with NGOs and private sector as to mainstream mine action activities, into humanitarian aid – to stabilisation and reconstruction activities, peace and security and with the ultimate goal of development.

Sir, Co-chairs,

Denmark remains fully committed to fulfil its obligations in accordance with Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention. At the 9th Meeting of State Parties, Denmark was granted a 22 month preliminary extension allowing for technical surveys and environmental impact assessments as basis for preparing and presenting a final time schedule and release plan for approval at the coming 10th MSP. I am happy to inform State Parties and other present here today, that Denmark prior to the meeting of the Standing Committee has submitted its draft final extension request.

Herein, Denmark requests a final extension of 18 month to address the mine clearance of the remaining area. Provided that State Parties decide to approve our request, Denmark by no later than July 2012 can declare itself a mine-free country.

The Danish government is responsible for funding the remaining mine clearance and a political decision has been taken to allocate the necessary funding, which is estimated to approximately 100 million Danish kroner/ [16,4 mio. US dollars / 13,4 mio. Euros].

Sir, Co-chairs, with your permission, I will give the floor to the head of the mine clearance operation of the Danish Coastal Authority, Mr. Erik Willadsen to report on the actions taken since the Review Conference of State Parties and the way ahead in fulfilling Denmark's Article 5 mine clearance obligations.

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Denmark's remaining mined area originates from the Second World War and is concentrated on the west coast of Jutland at the peninsula of Skallingen. There has been no mine related accidents since 1946 and the negative impact to the local community of in Skallingen is insignificant. Denmark has established a structure suited for large scale mine clearance under the Danish Ministry of Transportation in which the Danish Coastal authority is appointed to plan and manage the operation.

When the mine clearance operation was initiated the affected area was divided into three sub-areas: Area 1 was cleared in 2006; Area 2 was cleared in 2007-2008; Thus, of the original 300 hectares of mine affected area, 121,2 hectares now remain to be cleared from mines.

Sir, Co-chairs,

The remaining area consists of five different terrain types, each of which provides different conditions for the mines: dune or dyke; marshland covered with dunes; frequently flooded low marshland; high marshland; and finally, of beach terrain.

The mine threat is different for each of these terrain types and so are the clearance criteria as well as the planned clearance methods. In analyzing the area various mine

types have been identified, including anti-tank mines, such as the Teller mines. These mines will be removed as well during the clearance operation.

In the dike and the dunes, the clearance criteria will be to remove and destroy all explosive items to a depth of 2 metres. This will be done by sifting the entire volume between the surface and in 2 metres depth.

In the marshland which has been covered with dunes after the mines were laid, the clearance criteria will be to remove and destroy all explosive items in a danger layer around the estimated 1944 surface. This will be done by removing the safe volume above the danger layer and then sift the danger layer.

In the low marshland the clearance criteria will be to remove **all Teller mines** to a depth of 50 cm. The clearance will be done with metal detection equipment.

In the high marsh the clearance criteria will be to remove all explosive items to a depth of 20 cm. The items will be identified with metal detection equipment.

In the beach the clearance criteria will be to remove all Teller mines to a depth of 130 cm. Identification of the mines will be done with metal detection equipment.

Sir, Co-chairs,

In May this year a clearance contractor was identified in a competitive tender process. The mine clearance operation will commence by 1 July this year. The Contractor has been given until the end of 2011 to complete the clearance. We have then added a six months buffer-period to allow weather-caused delays as well as to complete quality control of the area.

Consequentially, Denmark will be able to release the area at latest by 1 of July 2012.

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Sir, Co-chairs,

Denmark will continue to keep State Parties informed of our progress and actions. We have appreciated our dialogue with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in the planning process regarding the release of the final area, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank GICHD for its valuable cooperation so far.

Finally, should any State Parties have an interest in the experiences Denmark has gained in terms of mine clearance in dynamic beach and dune areas as well as marsh areas, we will be happy to share information.

Honorable Co-chairs and Co-rapporteurs, Dear delegates,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION