
**Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel
Mines and on Their Destruction**

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Article 5 extension requests and the extension request process

**Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
Article 5 of the Convention**
Executive summary

Submitted by Angola

1. The landmine problem in Angola is a result of 40 years of armed conflict starting in 1961 and lasting until April 2002. Landmine contamination is a result of a systematic and in some cases non-standardized use of mines throughout the country undertaken by more than 10 armies and armed wings of national and international movements.
2. The nature of landmine and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) contamination in the country is complex. This complexity not only derives from the multiplicity of actors, but also from how mines were placed by both guerrilla groups and by regular armies. The provinces most affected were those that witnessed the most extensive and prolonged fighting, including Moxico, Kuando Kubango, and Bie. Therefore these provinces have the highest number of mine fields and are highly impacted, according to the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS). However, all provinces are affected by mines and UXO. Between 2003 and 2011, mines caused 390 deaths and 564 injuries, including deminers, other clearance staff on duty and civilians.
3. Angola began mine clearance activities under the United Nations Angola Verification Mission Teams (UNAVEM I) in 1991. However, with the resumption of war in 1992 this effort was abandoned. Clearance resumed in 1995 with the entrance of international NGOs, especially Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), The Halo Trust, Santa Barbara, and MgM, and continued intermittently. This effort was initially accompanied by UN OCHA and later by Ex. National Institute for Removal of Obstacles and Explosive (INAROE), at the time the national authority. Clearance resumed in a more systematic and permanent manner in 2002 after the signing of the Luena Peace Agreement.
4. The first exercises for the identification of minefields also date back to 1995, when the NPA carried out a non-technical level I survey in most of the country between 1995 and 1997. Partial results showed that 35 per cent of the territory was contaminated. The data resulting from this survey were entrusted to the INAROE. This survey was inconclusive, since the war returned between 1997 and 1998.

5. As mentioned above, the resumption of war in 1998 prevented Angola from getting a clear picture of mine contamination in the country. This problem was aggravated by the fact that mines were used in 1998-2002, the last years of the war, eliminating the reliability of any survey carried out before 2002.
6. Therefore, in order to have a real picture of the level of contamination of the country and its impact, the LIS was conducted. The LIS was carried out by six organizations including the Halo Trust, APN, INTERSOS, MAG, Santa Barbara Foundation and INAD. The LIS was coordinated by the Survey Action Center (SAC) and supervised by the Inter-Sectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH), the State body established in 2001 to replace INAROOE. The LIS identified 1,988 communities impacted out of a total of 3,293 suspected areas of contamination. The LIS estimated that eight per cent of the 23,504 communities in Angola were impacted with landmines.
7. The LIS provided an overview of the mine contamination problem in Angola. However, some areas were left outside the survey, for instance the provinces of Malanje and Lunda Norte. A total of 19 communes were not surveyed due to inaccessibility. In areas not covered by the LIS for reasons of inaccessibility, it is also necessary to consider that LIS protocols failed to cover areas outside the geographical range of communities, such as roads, other infrastructure and other important points for national reconstruction and the development of the country.
8. Another problem found after performing the LIS was related to the exaggerated size of the polygons. This problem continues today as a constant concern of both the operators and the national authority for mine action. The LIS has become the baseline for mine action in Angola and is therefore a tool for planning and priority setting.
9. In 2006 the Council of Ministers approved a five-year strategic plan based on the LIS, which included among other objectives, the elimination of all high-impact areas, the reduction by half of medium-impact areas and the marking of all low-impact areas. Also based on the LIS, mine risk education evolved from conventional awareness-raising to an inclusive process that gave communities a much more active role in finding solutions to the landmine problem within their communities.
10. Since the signing of the Luena Peace Agreement, many clearance activities were carried out. Different capacities and cleaning techniques, including manual, mechanical, canine and combined, have been tested and used, with encouraging results. In recent years there have been several on-going debates and studies on the application of techniques to land release. To this end, a group of experts went to Mozambique in 2009 and the United States of America in 2010 to further discuss the subject with technicians and experts in these matters.
11. Given the organizational complexity of a mine action program and the need to address the many challenges that this activity involves, the Government of the Republic of Angola, dissolved INAROOE in 2001 and in its place established CNIDAH, a multi-sectoral body composed of the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Health, Education, Agriculture, Social Welfare, Interior, Planning, Transport, Public Works, and Territorial Administration and the Staff of the Angolan Armed Forces. CNIDAH has since that time coordinated and supervised the entire mine action program which includes aspects such as assistance to mine victims and advocacy. CNIDAH also provided a set of policies, rules and standards to facilitate the management of mine action programs in Angola and diligently continues to pursue best practices and mechanisms to strengthen the processes of planning, prioritization and effective coordination of actors and their operations.
12. In 2005 the Government established the Executive Commission for Demining (CED), now composed of the National Demining Institute, Demining Brigades of the Angolan Armed Forces, Border Guard Police of Angola and the Military House of the

Presidency. CED is coordinated by the Minister of Social Welfare. This committee, among other functions, coordinates the activities of State operators and gives a new impetus to projects aimed at national reconstruction and development.

13. The mine action program in Angola has achieved very encouraging results. From 1995 until the present time due to a combination of factors and actors including the leadership of CNIDAH, much has been achieved throughout the country, relieving the pressure exerted by the mines after the war.

14. Demining has made possible the rehabilitation of important social infrastructure and the reduction of deaths caused by mines and UXO. The humanitarian operators NPN, Halo Trust, DCA, MAG, MgM, Santa Barbara and INTERSOS, and APACOMINAS, INAD, CED (after 2005) and commercial demining companies cleared 4,491,707,182 square meters since 1996. Their work allowed the return of Internally Displaced Persons and Angolan refugees from neighboring countries. These operations have resulted in considerable benefits for the population and communities in agricultural grazing.

15. Specifically the Executive Commission for Demining – (CED) cleared 1.924.051.623 square meters including roads, rail lines, fiber optic lines and bridges between 2005 and 2011, resulting in the creation of conditions for the implementation of social projects such as the construction of schools, hospitals, dams, cities, etc. throughout the country.

16. All operators, although in different dimensions, developed some form of relevant mine risk education activities in order to keep civilians and their property out of minefields or suspected minefields.

17. Since 1995, all operators conducted clearance operations in Angola based on certain standards. Operators are accredited by CNIDAH and are guided primarily by their own standards, and national standards and / or as directed by CNIDAH. The process of creating standards is done in consultation with partners and experts on the basis of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). CNIDAH has 8 control and quality management teams, distributed in nine regions (Bie, Bengo, Benguela, Huambo, Huila, Luanda, Malanje, Moxico and Kuando) across the country.

18. The Angolan State recognizes achievements in demining. However, Angola is aware of the extent of the problem and challenge of the work that remains to be done. The size of the country and nature of the landmine problem makes Angola one of the countries with a mine action program that requires careful attention. Angola also has large areas in its territory which contain mines or are suspected to contain mines. The number of accidents decreased from 108 in 2003 to 33 in 2011. However, the risk is still present. According to data from CNIDAH Database there are 15 high-impact areas, 1100 medium-impact areas and 1277 low-impact areas. There are national reconstruction projects which cannot be implemented until clearance is complete. Some of these projects will have a direct impact on the lives of Angolans and will improve the social conditions of thousands of citizens and communities.

19. Much work has been done, although it is recognized that part of this work cannot be properly reflected in the database. The reflection of operational efforts undertaken in the national database is one of the reasons why Angola submits this extension request. It must be said that demining in Angola is on the political agenda and is a priority of the State.

20. The Angolan State is currently the largest donor to the mine action program. In recent years Angola has invested a total value of about \$315 million. It is clear that international assistance and support for mine action remains essential in order to more quickly overcome the remaining challenges and to promote the full socio-economic

development of the country. At the same time, Angola strives to meet its national and international commitments.

21. Angola has benefited from significant contributions from international donors for its mine action program since 1994. Most resources have been allocated to demining including control and quality management, and technical and non-technical survey. However, CNIDAH also made significant investments Mine Risk Education (MRE), Mine Victim Assistance (MVA), program coordination, advocacy, etc. When external grants decreased, the Angolan State took the lead in financing the mine action program. However, Angola acknowledges the contribution of international partners remains essential at this stage considering the extent and nature of the challenge that still persist. Angola might have emerged from long years of war but it still faces the challenges of reconstruction and development, so it is not yet able to take on the challenge of clearing the country of landmines without the cooperation of the international community.

22. Angola calls for an extension of its deadline to allow sufficient time to comply with the provisions of Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention. This request is intended only to solve some internal problems, especially the resolution of discrepancies in the database as well as to allow Angola to gain a deeper understanding of the current situation of contamination in the country. Some factors have prevented the results of operations from being properly reflected in the database. Therefore, the real situation of the country's current contamination is not clear enough. The five year period that has been requested will be used to perform a set of activities designed to update the database of CNIDAH so that it in fact reflects the actual situation on the ground.

23. After five years and having completed the required activities, Angola will submit an application more suited to the situation that it identifies. It is however important to note that given the extent and nature of contamination in the country, the elimination of the problem may require additional time beyond the deadline requested. It is hoped that the adoption of land release techniques combined with new techniques and methodologies for mine clearance may contribute to the acceleration for the resolution of the landmine problem in the country.

24. The mine action program in Angola has greatly contributed to the social and economic development of the country. Since 1995, many lives have been saved thanks to the demining program. Clearance allowed the return of Internally Displaced Persons and refugees in the final stages of the war, and has allowed the Government and its partners to rebuild, in record time, infrastructure essential to improving the socio-economic situation of citizens and of the State. In fact, agriculture and mineral exploration have only been possible thanks to the mine action program.

25. To rationally use the time period requested, five years, Angola has already started some activities and more are being prepared. For example the non-technical survey will allow Angola to determine a new baseline for future challenges in the country. This baseline will present information from the database resulting from the LIS, but will be supplemented with other components not contained in the Protocols of the LIS, such as the inclusion of roads, bridges and supporting infrastructure for national reconstruction. Additionally, other tasks such as updating the database and the elimination of discrepancies within the databases of operators will be undertaken.

26. This period will also be used to resolve some administrative issues relating to coordination, planning and prioritization between the CED and CNIDAH. Investment will be used to provide better equipment to INAD demining teams, PNGF, FAA and the Military House of the Presidency, and for both the enhancement of techniques and procedures in humanitarian demining as well as in the reporting process modelled on IMSMA.

27. In fact, the non-technical survey has already started. The first municipalities in the province of Malanje were surveyed in 2011. A general work plan is attached. The survey will be performed by NGO's, including NPA, The Halo Trust, DCA, MAG, MgM, APACOMINAS, ODAH, Youth Club Huila and other previously identified. (?). It is expected that research will terminate by the end of 2013, and updating of the database for the preparation of a request for an extension of Article 5 will be made final during the year 2015.

28. It is hoped that the survey results, the mapping project and the consequent updating of the database will be completed before submitting the next request. This request, however, should not be understood as the first and only effort by the Angolan State to identify precisely the remaining extent of the landmine problem in Angola. Angola has made constant efforts to maintain current data on mine contamination over the years.

29. The demining activities included in the work plan are the result of ongoing tasks or reflect priorities of the Government or communities. Clearance will not be suspended during the five years that Angola requests for the extension. Angola will keep State Parties informed of developments on the ground and on any adjustments to work plans.

30. It is estimated that a total of 793,177,246.68 square meters is contaminated with mines, and the precise number is still unknown. This lack of knowledge is essentially the reason for requesting an extension (?). Angola expects to find out the exact percentage of contamination in the country and to identify what still requires attention, both now as well as during the period requested and granted. It is expected that the non-technical research and mapping project will provide a better projection of the remaining challenge. Therefore this request does not encompass the final projections in terms of time and resources to eliminate the problem.

31. Therefore, Angola requests an extension for a period of five years beginning in January 2013 and ending on 12 January 2018. During this period Angola agrees to implement a series of administrative and operational activities in order to clearly identify the results achieved in recent years and to determine the extent of the remaining challenge. This clarification will be accomplished through: (a) Non-technical survey across the country which will reduce the areas of the overestimated polygons in the LIS and will also seek to find areas not identified by previous research including LIS; (b) Mapping project will aim to develop a geographical image of mined areas and demining as a complement to non-technical research; (c) Development of training activities, planning and advocacy aimed at correcting existing discrepancies between the Database of CNIDAH and operators, including the CED, and/or contamination with the actual situation on the ground; (d) Continuation of clean-up activities underway throughout the country and enhanced understanding of the concepts, techniques and mechanisms of land release and quality control and quality management.
