
**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

**Analysis of the request submitted by Cyprus for an extension
of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-
personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the
Convention**

**Submitted by the President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States
Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for
extensions**

1. Cyprus ratified the Convention on 17 January 2003. The Convention entered into force for Cyprus on 1 July 2003. In its initial transparency report submitted on 24 April 2005, Cyprus reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Cyprus is obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 July 2013. Cyprus, believing that it will be unable to do so by that date, submitted on 30 March 2012 to the President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties, a request for an extension of its deadline. Cyprus's request is for three years (until 1 July 2016).

2. The request indicates that at entry into force, there were a total of 20 minefields containing 4,653 anti-personnel mines in areas under the effective control of the Republic of Cyprus outside the "buffer zone" which were emplaced by the National Guard and 81 minefields (13 of which were emplaced by the National Guard) within the "buffer zone" containing a total of 27,174 mines measuring 10,985,338 square metres. The request further indicates that north of the "buffer zone" there were 28 minefields containing 1,006 mines emplaced by the National Guard as well as an additional 21 minefields with parts of these minefields located in the "buffer zone".

3. The request indicates that in 2003 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice and Public Order became formally responsible for implementation of the Convention through an inter-ministerial committee, established in May 2003, to serve as the national mine action authority for Cyprus. The request indicates that the task for destroying stockpiled and emplaced mines was assigned to the Engineers Corps Command of the National Guard and that, subsequently, the National Guard General Staff established the Cyprus Mine Action Centre (CYMAC) on 25 August 2003 to implement all of Cyprus's obligations arising from the Convention. The request further

indicates that the inter-ministerial committee proceeded to develop a national plan for implementing the Convention containing an annual timetable for the clearance of the 20 minefields under the effective control of Cyprus. The States Parties mandated to analyse requests submitted under Article 5 of the Convention (hereafter referred to as the “analysing group”) noted that Cyprus had acted promptly after entry into force to plan for and begin implementing Article 5.

4. The request indicates that as far back as 1983 Cyprus cleared ten minefields near the “buffer zone”, while in 2002 it cleared a further two. The request indicates that clearance of National Guard-emplaced minefields located in areas controlled by Cyprus and located outside the “buffer zone” began in 2003. The request indicates that, to date, a total of 17 of the 20 minefields have been cleared resulting in the destruction of 2,945 anti-personnel mines. The request further indicates that Cyprus will complete implementation of Article 5 with respect to all mined areas under its effective control by its deadline of 1 July 2013. The analysing group noted Cyprus’ commitment to destroy all emplaced anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its effective control by Cyprus’ initial ten year deadline.

5. The request indicates that in 2002 Cyprus called upon the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to assist in the removal of all minefields and other remnants of war in the “buffer zone” and that UNFICYP invited the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to act as its advisor on the clearance project. The request indicates that an agreement was signed in 2004 on demining inside the “buffer zone”. The request indicates that all 13 National Guard-emplaced minefields in the “buffer zone” were cleared between November 2004 and July 2005 with 2,185 anti-personnel mines destroyed. The request further indicates that the UNMAS demining programme in the “buffer zone” was concluded in January 2011 with the clearance of a total of 81 minefields, the destruction of 27,174 anti-personnel and anti-tank mines, and the return of approximately 11 square kilometres to civilian use. The request further indicates that one minefield in the buffer zone in the area south of Varosha still remains.

6. The request indicates that efforts undertaken by CYMAC to release land known to contain mines have had a significant positive humanitarian, socioeconomic and environmental impact with territory having been conceded both to farmers for cultivating land and to shepherds for feeding and watering their flocks.

7. The request indicates that Cyprus states that the sole circumstance impeding Cyprus from destroying all anti-personnel mines in mined areas that it has reported to be under its jurisdiction or control is that Cyprus has expressed that it does not have effective control over the remaining areas in question.

8. As noted, Cyprus’s request is for three years (until 1 July 2016). The request indicates during this period Cyprus would again evaluate the situation and form a fresh opinion as to whether matters have evolved so that the Cyprus is, or may in future be, able to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines and to arrive at a specific assessment of the time required for their destruction.

9. The request indicates that as the extent of contamination in areas not under the effective control of Cyprus is not known, Cyprus “is unable to indicate a specific time-frame which would be required to render such areas free of anti-personnel mines.” The request further indicates that “according to the best estimate of the Republic’s Ministry of Defence, completion of the task of destruction of anti-personnel mines and rendering the areas safe from explosive remnants will take a considerable amount of time.” The analysing group noted that it may be premature to assume the task of destroying all emplaced anti-personnel mines would “considerable amount of time” given Cyprus’ own acknowledgement that the extent of contamination is not known.

10. The analysing group noted the necessity and importance of each State Party which has reported mined areas that contain, or are suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines under its jurisdiction or control and which believes that it will be unable to implement Article 5.1 with respect to all such areas within a ten year period submitting a request for an extension in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Convention and the decisions of the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties. The analysing group further noted the importance of a State Party providing information on changes to the status of the control of mined areas when such a State Party has indicated that matters related to control affect the implementation of Article 5 during extension periods.
