Republic of Serbia Updated Detailed Work Plan for the Remaining Period Covered by the Extension

The Republic of Serbia is a State Party of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) since 2004 and is fully committed to the implementation of its obligations under the Convention.

At the 17th Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction, which was held in the period 26-30 November 2018, Geneva, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 4 year extension of the deadline for fulfillment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which is 1 March 2023.

Namely, due to the fact that Serbia has been facing a number of difficulties, such as the lack of adequate financial resources, and presence of areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs-rockets and other UXO in addition to mine contaminated areas, Serbia was in no position to meet their 2019 deadline and in March 2018, Serbia submitted a request for their deadline to be extended to 1 March 2023.

In 2019, the Government of Serbia has allocated bigger funds from the state budget for demining operations than in previous years, that is around 350,000 EUR, compared to 200,000 EUR in 2018, and 100,000 EUR in 2017, 2016 and 2015.

Namely, despite the economic and overall situation, the Serbian Government has taken more ownership of the problem, first by starting funding demining operations and then increasing the funds for demining operations gradually by years.

These funds were matched through ITF Enhancing Human Security with available donor funds.

SMAC, as a national mine action coordinating authority has requested from the Serbian Government to continue to allocate funds in the years of the requested extension. The Serbian Government allocated 350,000 EUR for demining operations in 2020, but due to the coronavirus crisis and government measures in the fight against consequences of the crisis, the demining budget will be decreased by 20 or 30%. In 2020, Serbia plans to match the available national funds with donor funds through ITF.

The Republic of Serbia will make all their efforts to complete the Article 5 obligation, in order to primarily provide safety of local population, safe exploitation of woods, safe use of road communications, environmental protection, as well as reduction of fire risks.
As of 1 April 2020, there are 6 areas in the Republic of Serbia suspected to contain anti-personnel mines totalling 1,125,310 square metres*. Areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines remain in 3 villages in the Municipality of Bujanovac as follows:

**Summary of remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of April 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines</th>
<th>Number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines</th>
<th>Total number of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines</th>
<th>Amount of area known to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)</th>
<th>Amount of area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)</th>
<th>Total amount of area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bujanovac</td>
<td>Ravno Bučje</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>390,300</td>
<td>390,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Končulj</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>707,010</td>
<td>707,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dobrosin</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>/</td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>/</td>
<td><strong>1,125,310</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,125,310</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that the Republic of Serbia is facing with a problem of newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality. In October 2019, in the territory of the Bujanovac Municipality, at the request of representatives of local self-government, the Mine Action Center of the Republic of Serbia (SMAC) conducted survey and marking of locations suspected to be contaminated by groups of mines. These are locations where forest fires occurred, and according to eyewitnesses, explosions could be heard in several places after the fire broke out, indicating the existence of mines in these areas.

Representatives of SMAC and Emergency Management Staff of the Municipality of Bujanovac, visited the sites and interviewed local residents, local community representatives, fire-fighters, as well as police and military representatives. Furthermore, mine suspected areas have been marked in order to clearly and visually warn of mine danger, as well as to ban the entry of population into mine suspected area. Mine warning signs have been posted in the areas of possible access to mined areas (roads, paths and other areas where movement of people is expected).

Given that the population is multi-ethnic, the wording on the signs has been written in Serbian and Albanian.

In the forthcoming period, and pending on available funds, SMAC intends to survey the remaining sites for which there are indications of contamination. The aim is to record all
changes that have occurred as a result of new circumstances and are the consequences of new findings. The data on the scope of the contamination are not available at the time of writing this report.

The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and had not been planted in specific patterns.

These are groups of mines, not minefields. On most of these areas deaths of humans or animals occurred or a mine was accidentally detected.

All these circumstances aggravate survey and clearance efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations. Survey results in previous period showed that there are not sufficient indicators for the mine suspected areas to be classified as confirmed hazardous areas, so that the area in previous period regarded as such has been classified as suspected hazardous area.

Please note that, if the funds are provided, we intend, by the use of methods such as cancellation through survey, manual demining, mechanical demining, canine demining to complete clearance in Serbia by its deadline.

The following methods have been employed and will be employed in Serbia to release areas suspected to contain mines:

- Non-technical survey
- Technical survey
- Clearance
- Mechanical demining
- Canine demining

In Serbia, an initial survey which includes collection of data and analysis of available documentation on mine emplacement is employed, as well as a non-technical survey (NTS), which follows after an analysis of previously collected data, conditions in the field, statements by local population, hunters, foresters, people dealing with exploitation of wood, representatives of Civil Protection and Police, amongst others. One significant indicator has been data on accidents that have occurred. Non-technical survey determines borders of the suspected area, coordinates of the location, type of mines and other UXO, allocation of land, impact on environment.

Technical survey is employed to additionally collect information by technical methods on a suspected area and in case when the data collected by a non-technical survey are not sufficient for suspected areas to be declared hazardous or safe. Technical survey is done by the combination of several methods - manual detection by metal detectors and visually. Manual detection is conducted in prospections. The scheme and dimensions of a prospection depend on land configuration, and all in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

Clearance is conducted in accordance with the IMAS. It is done by a manual method at the depth of 20 cm. Apart from a manual method, demining machines can be used, as well as dogs.

The size of the area to be cleared is determined on the basis of processed data which have been collected by a non-technical survey.
The development of relevant national mine action standards is still in progress.

The main reasons why Serbia’s preference is manual demining are as follows:

- Unregistered mine contaminated areas (groups of mines): The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and have not been planted in specific patterns, which aggravates demining efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.

- Climactic conditions: Most of the remaining suspected mined areas in Serbia are mountainous with challenging terrain and thick vegetation. The fact that these areas have not been accessed since the end of the conflict (2000-2001), due to suspicion of mines, means that the land is unmanaged, making it even less accessible. Given the above, SMAC believes that most of the above areas are not appropriate for the use of machinery or mine detection dogs.

The Municipality of Bujanovac, where the remaining contamination by mines is located, is characterized by population of mixed national background (Serbs, Albanians, Roma, etc.). It is one of the most underdeveloped municipalities in Serbia. The territory of the Municipality covers the area of 461 km². There are 43 302 inhabitants, namely 94 inhabitants per km². Since the remaining contamination by mines is located on mostly hilly and mountainous terrain which is of an utmost importance to the population of nearby villages from the aspect of cattle breeding, exploitation of woods, mushroom picking, and tobacco production, suspected hazardous areas being in an immediate vicinity of settlements pose a constant threat to safety of local population.

As regards the actions taken by Serbia in Mine Risk Education and its efforts to ensure that these activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, coherent with applicable national and international standards, tailored to the needs of mine-affected communities and integrated into ongoing mine action activities, namely data gathering, clearance and victim assistance as appropriate, please note that Serbia ensures women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities and there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance operations.

Demining of mine contaminated areas in the Municipality of Bujanovac will have a number of qualitative benefits including the following:

- Clearance will contribute to the safety of the local population;
- Conditions for safe exploitation of forest, development of cattle breeding and picking of mushrooms will be created;
- Environment protection and protection against fire will be significantly increased;
- Given that Bujanovac is the most underdeveloped municipality in Serbia, for the purpose of its development and prevention of migration of its inhabitants due to economic reasons, demining will enable implementation of development projects, such as for example development of wood industry, namely exploitation and processing of wood.
There are a number of circumstances that present challenges for Serbia in complying with its Article 5 deadline. Particular issues faced by Serbia are as follows:

- **Unregistered mine contaminated areas (groups of mines):** The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and have not been planted in specific patterns, which aggravates demining efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.
- **Newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality, in October 2019.**
- **Climactic conditions:** Contaminated areas are inaccessible during some periods of the year causing operation delays.
- **Contamination other than mines:** Specificity and complexity of the problem presents the fact that apart from mines still remaining in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, Serbia also encounters with numerous challenges related to clearance of the areas contaminated with unexploded cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO. All these unexploded ordnance are either remaining as a result of the 1999 bombing, or are caused by an explosion and fire in a military depot, or are remaining from previous wars.

As stated in our Extension request plan, the dynamics of implementation of our clearance projects might be affected by provision of funds, that is if the funds for implementation of our projects are not provided, our plan will be directly affected and more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, if more funds are provided, the work plan could be implemented in due time. Furthermore, as stated above, a particular challenge faced by Serbia is the discovery of previously unrecorded mine suspected area and uncertainty of the scope.

The Republic of Serbia carries out a number of efforts to ensure that the civilians from affected communities are not injured by mines, cluster munitions and other UXO including through the following methods:

- **Marking;**
  The whole area suspected to be contaminated with various types of mines has been visibly marked with “STOP UXO” signs in Serbian and Albanian languages, given that it is an area with multiethnic population. Areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, have been also marked correspondingly. Marking is conducted by the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) and within its regular activities the SMAC periodically visits contaminated locations making sure that these signs remain emplaced.

- **Risk education;**
  Locals of the affected communities are being informed about demining activities through a number of means and media. Mine risk education has been conducted in schools and affected communities. In accordance with the IMAS, during demining operations, evacuation of people from houses, shops and other communal locations located within the zone of demining works is conducted.
Suspension of traffic on the roads within the zone of demining operations is conducted, too. In relation to that, the SMAC coordinates activities with local authorities, school authorities and other relevant state bodies (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transport), local media means in communities where demining operations are conducted.

**Work Plan for the Remaining Period Covered by the Extension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimated Amount of Area to be cleared</th>
<th>Source of Funding Clearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Areas 2 298.700 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget** + Donations***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 298.700 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget** + Donations***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Areas 1 269.280 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 269.280 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Areas 1 390,300 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 390,300 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>Areas 2 167,030 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 167,030 sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Areas 6* 1,125,310* sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area 1,125,310* sqm</td>
<td>National Budget + Donations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that the Republic of Serbia is facing with a problem of newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality. The data on the scope of the contamination are not available at the time of writing this document. The figures indicated in the table do not include the newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality. Upon the provision of funds for field operations, in the period 2020-2021 we expect the commencement of the assessment of the previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination.

**In 2020, the Serbian Government allocated 350.000 EUR for demining operations in 2020, but due to the coronavirus crisis and government measures in the fight against consequences of the crisis, the demining budget will be decreased by 20 or 30%. However, in 2020, Serbia plans to match the available national funds with donor funds through ITF.**
*** As of April 2020, SMAC hasn’t received the confirmation by potential donors about the available funds.

In the Republic of Serbia, demining operations in accordance with the IMAS conduct specialized companies and other organizations registered for such works, and which are technically equipped and employ adequate staff, and as such accredited by the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia.

Contractors for implementation of humanitarian demining/clearance SMAC projects funded from the budget and international donations are selected through tender procedures.  
As of April 2020, tender procedures have not been completed, so that we are not in a position to state by which organizations the works would be conducted.

Regarding funding, the Republic of Serbia has already undertaken concrete steps in order to present its challenges and needs to potential donor countries and other relevant stakeholders. In the previous period, SMAC had many bilateral meetings with several states in which we presented our main challenges in landmine clearance completion process. Those meetings have resulted in donations which were realized by the US, Japan and Republic of Korea, leading to implementation of our demining projects.

Please note, that the Republic of Serbia has followed the recommendation of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance to engage itself in an individualized approach, that is, Serbia has accepted a Platform to hold a frank discussion with relevant stakeholders on the current status of Serbia’s national programme, the needs and challenges in implementing its mine clearance and other obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

On the margins of the June 2018 Intersessional meeting, the Republic of Serbia organized a meeting inviting potential donors, experts and other stakeholders, to attend the presentation aimed at raising attention to its problem and seeking adequate financial support to solve the pending Article 5 obligations.

In addition to the continuation of approaching potential donors through series of bilateral meetings, SMAC will continue to raise awareness of the funding problem lobbying with state authorities, public enterprises and local authorities to fund clearance from contaminated areas for which they are directly interested.

Areas known and suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of 1 April 2020, and the estimated date of completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines (square meters)</th>
<th>Type and quantity of anti-personnel mines</th>
<th>Estimated period when mines were emplaced</th>
<th>Estimated date of completion (year-end)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ravno</td>
<td>Bučje</td>
<td>21°47'16&quot;E</td>
<td>N 42°35'22&quot;</td>
<td>390,300</td>
<td>Groups of mines of unknown type and quantity</td>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>2020-2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Longitude</td>
<td>Latitude</td>
<td>Area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines (square meters)</td>
<td>Type and quantity of anti-personnel mines</td>
<td>Estimated period when mines were emplaced</td>
<td>Estimated date of completion (year-end)</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bujanovac</td>
<td>Končulj</td>
<td>21°41'16.08''E</td>
<td>42°28'27.84''N</td>
<td>707,010</td>
<td>Groups of mines of unknown type and quantity</td>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>2020-2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dobrosin</td>
<td>21°38'10''E</td>
<td>42°26'58''N</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>Groups of mines of unknown type and quantity</td>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>2020-2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,125,310*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality have not been indicated in the table, since the scope of it is yet to be determined. Upon the provision of funds for field operations, we expect the commencement of the assessment of the previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination in the period 2020-2021.