

12th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
ICBL Comments on Angola's Extension Request
3 December 2012



Thank you Mr. President.

Again, the ICBL has prepared comments on Angola's request that is available outside this room. So let me just briefly make a few points on Angola – on the clarity of the request, resource mobilization, and the amount of time requested.

First, Angola's request lacks clarity in both what has been achieved to date, as well as detailed plans and targets for the extension period. So we ask Angola to provide such details as soon as possible. Once such benchmarks are established, Angola should commit to reporting on progress in reaching them during the extension period. In addition, the lack of clarity in the request may be connected to Angola's past inability to collect and manage data properly, so the ICBL urges Angola to make the necessary management and policy changes to ensure the work on the database will resolve data quality issues for the duration of the mine action program.

Our second point is that the request is not clear on resource mobilization plans after 2013, as well as Angola's planned national contributions to mine action. Foreign aid seems to be declining since donors see that Angola is able to fund mine action on its own. Indeed, Angola has contributed, and plans to give, large amounts of funding for clearance. But much of these national contributions are going for demining land for infrastructure projects that sometimes takes place without prior evidence of mine contamination, meaning that the funds are not contributing to fulfilling its Article 5 goals. So the ICBL calls on Angola to continue allocating significant national funding to its mine action program, but to ensure that such funds go towards fulfilling its obligations under Article 5 in the most expedient and efficient manner, including by funding the international NGOs to carry out survey and clearance.

Finally, Mr. President, while it is normally positive that a State Party without a good picture of remaining contamination seeks an "interim" extension to get this information and develop a clearance plan, this should be a *short* period of time. The Analyzing Group asked Angola to reconsider their request for five years, which appeared to them, and to us, more time than needed to get a better estimate of contamination. With this in mind, and given the request's lack of solid support for a 5-year extension, ***the ICBL believes Angola should only request and be granted a three-year extension.*** We support the ICRC's analysis in this regard.