

Decisions on the request submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

30 November 2018

1. The Meeting assessed the request submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina for an extension of its deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with article 5.1, agreeing unanimously to grant the request for an extension until 1 March 2021.
2. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that it is unfortunate that after almost twenty years since entry into force, Bosnia and Herzegovina is unable to specify how much work remains and how it will be carried out. It is positive however that Bosnia and Herzegovina intends to take steps to garner an understanding of the true remaining extent of the challenge and to develop plans that precisely project the amount of time that will be required to complete article 5 implementation. In this context, the Meeting noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina requesting only the period of time necessary to assess relevant facts and develop a meaningful forward looking plan based on these facts. The Meeting further noted that, by requesting a two year extension, Bosnia and Herzegovina was projecting that it would need approximately two years from the date of submission of its request to obtain clarity regarding the remaining challenge, produce a detailed plan and submit a third extension request.
3. In granting the request, the Meeting also noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), disaggregating by area cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey and addressed through clearance. The Meeting further noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina ensuring as soon as possible that the most relevant land-release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with IMAS, are in place and applied for the full and expedient implementation of this aspect of the Convention.
4. In granting the request, the Meeting further noted that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made it clear that an increase in government and external funding is necessary to fully implement the plan contained within its request. In this regard, the Meeting underlined that Bosnia and Herzegovina would inspire greater confidence on the part of those in a position to provide assistance and show greater national ownership by swiftly adopting the National Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025 and the Amendment Act to the Demining Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Meeting further noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina continuing to ensure that coordination mechanisms with partners and approval procedures within the government are effective and efficient in order to support the implementation.
5. Also in granting the request, the Meeting noted that the plan presented by Bosnia and Herzegovina is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the pace of implementation. The Meeting also noted that the plan is based on allocations from State budgets and contingent upon stable international funding. In this regard, the Meeting noted that the Convention would benefit from Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting annually to the States Parties on the following:
 - (a) Progress in developing relevant land release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with IMAS, for the full and expedient implementation of the Convention during the extension request period and their impact on annual targets as given in Bosnia and Herzegovina's work plan;

- (b) Progress in land release activities relative to the commitments given in Bosnia and Herzegovina's annual work plan, disaggregated in a manner consistent with the IMAS;
 - (c) Progress in implementing the "Country Assessment" and "Mine Action Governance and Management" projects and the results of these efforts; and
 - (d) Updates regarding national resource mobilisation efforts, including efforts in approaching potential donors and efforts in raising awareness of the lack of funding with state authorities, public enterprises and local authorities to fund clearance operations and the results of these efforts.
6. In addition to reporting as requested above, the Meeting noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding the implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request and other commitments made in the request at intersessional meetings, Meeting of the States Parties and Review Conferences as well as through its Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting.