

Decisions on the request submitted by Serbia 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 Serbia 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 2023.
2. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that, while Serbia had not been able to complete the implementation of the principle commitment it had made, as recorded in the decisions of the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties, to complete implementation by its deadline in 2019, Serbia has made commendable progress and has committed to address the remaining challenge over the extension period.
3. In granting the request, the meeting noted the importance of Serbia continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with the 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 Serbia 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. In this regard, the Meeting further noted that Serbia may find itself in a situation wherein it could proceed with implementation faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested.
4. Also in granting the request, the Meeting noted, as Serbia has made clear, that the further provision of government and external support is necessary to fully implement of the plan contained within its request, Serbia could inspire greater confidence on the part of those in a position to provide assistance by ensuring that the most effective and efficient methods are in place to address the remaining challenge and mobilising additional domestic resources.
5. Also in granting the request, the Meeting requested that Serbia submit to the Meeting by 30 April 2020 and 30 April 2022 updated detailed work plans for the remaining period covered by the extension. The Meeting noted that these work plans should contain an updated detailed list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with each year during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget.
6. Also in granting the request, the Meeting noted that the plan presented by Serbia 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 Serbia reporting annually to the States Parties on the following:
 - (a) Progress in land release activities relative to the commitments made in Serbia's annual work plan, disaggregated in a manner consistent with the IMAS, including the identification of new mined areas and their impact on annual targets as given in Serbia's work plan;
 - (b) Progress in developing relevant land release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with the IMAS, for the full and expedient implementation of the Convention during the extension request period and their impact on annual targets as given in Serbia's work plan; and

- (c) Updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts, including in approaching potential donors and in raising awareness of the lack of funding with state authorities, public enterprises and local authorities to fund clearance operations, and the result of these efforts.
7. In addition to reporting as requested above, the Meeting further noted the importance of Serbia 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 employing the Guide to Reporting.