

ICBL comments on the Extension Request of Niger

18MSP 16-20 November 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

This is Niger's fourth extension request. Niger is asking for another four years to clear a relatively small area (totalling 0.17km²) of remaining contamination. However, the request lacks a detailed work plan with annual projections; it does not provide information on resource mobilization efforts; and it does not include a plan for mine risk education.

Among positive points we note the following:

- For the first time since 2017, Niger reports having done some clearance (0.02 km² over the 2019-2020 period);
- The government of Niger commits to provide a significant portion (over 50%) of the required funding from national resources;
- Niger engaged with the Treaty's Committee on Assistance and Cooperation and held a meeting as part of the individualized approach, in the margins of the intersessional work program.

Points that will require further attention are as follows:

- Niger should provide a clear update on the amount of land surveyed and cleared to date, and clarify whether the remaining contamination (0.17km²) constitutes confirmed or suspected hazardous area.
- Following the initial meeting as part of the individualised approach, Niger needs to proactively engage international mine action operators and donors to secure the technical and financial support it requires.
- Consistent with Action #23 of the Oslo Action Plan, Niger needs to establish a solid work plan based on annual clearance projections and available demining capacity.
- Niger should develop and implement a costed and detailed MRE action plan, in line with Action #24 of the Oslo Action Plan.
- Niger should verify whether it also has contamination by improvised mines on its territory, and if so, include this within its reporting and clearance work.
- Niger should start to regularly report on progress with consistent use of IMAS terminology.

We anticipate, that with external support, Niger will be in a position to reconsider its plan and achieve completion much sooner than in four year. We call on Niger, donors and partners to work together to make this happen!

Thank you.