

**Statement by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on the Analysis of the
Request for extension submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Mr. President,

The Committee on Article 5 Implementation welcomes the efforts made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the preparation of its extension request.

Our Committee also welcomes the comments provided by expert organizations on this request, including from the Mine Action Review.

- On 24 September 2020, the Democratic Republic of the Congo submitted a request for extension of its 1 January 2021 deadline.
- While the Committee recognizes that Covid-19 might have caused additional difficulties in many cases this year, we would like to recall that, in order to function appropriately, the extension request process requires the submission of requests nine months prior to the meeting where they are considered. This allows an analysis of the request to be prepared and translated, as well as a cooperative exchange between the requesting State and the Committee on Article 5 Implementation.
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo's request is for a period of **eighteen (18) months**, until 1 July 2022.

Due to the late submission of this request by the DRC, the translations of the analysis are unfortunately not yet available on the Convention's website, but I understand that the Implementation Support Unit is working to make them available shortly, hopefully on Thursday at the latest, to ensure States Parties have enough time to consult the document in the six (6) official languages before a decision on this request is adopted on Friday afternoon under agenda item 11 ("Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5").

I would now like to share some key points of the analysis made by our Committee concerning the DRC's request.

- The Committee recognizes the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in its implementation efforts, as well as the challenges noted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including financial resources, the current security situation, environmental and geographic characteristics of the mined areas, Ebola and COVID- 19.
- The Committee welcomes the fact that the DRC has a strategic plan in place for implementation and recognizes the importance of the surveys to be carried out in early 2021 in the territories of Aru, Ituri Province, and Dugu, Haut-Uele Province.
- The Committee also welcomes the efforts by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in updating its national mine action standards to reflect new threats and operational requirements.
- The Committee further welcomes the efforts made to ensure the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address residual contamination.
- The Committee notes that the national demining plan of the Democratic Republic of the Congo may be affected by restrictions to access certain zones for security reasons. Moreover, the engagement

of international organisations and donors will be necessary. We also note the usefulness of regular updates on progress and challenges provided by the DRC at the Convention's future intersessional meetings and Meeting of the States Parties.

- In this regard, the Committee notes that the Convention would benefit from annual reporting from the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the following:
 - a) Progress of land release relative to the commitments listed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's work plan, disaggregated in a manner consistent with IMAS in accordance with the land release methodology employed, (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, and clearance through clearance);
 - b) The impact of survey outcomes in Aru territory (Ituri Province) and Dungu territory (Haut-Uele Province) and annual milestones as given in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's work plan, including adjusted milestones to national work plan based on new evidence including on the number of areas and amount of area to be addressed annually, and on how priorities have been established;
 - c) Progress on security-related access matters and potential positive or negative impacts regarding re-survey and clearance of mined areas;
 - d) Information on how implementation efforts take into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities;
 - e) Updates regarding detailed, costed and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities;
 - f) Updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts, including efforts in approaching potential donors and organisations in order to fund and assist in the implementation of clearance operations and the result of these efforts, including an expected timeline for recruitment, training and management of new or additional capacities; and
 - g) Progress on efforts to establish a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion.

The Committee noted the importance, in addition to the Democratic Republic of the Congo reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of 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 and Meetings of the States Parties, as well as through its Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting.