

GICHD remarks on APBMC Article 5 extension request submitted by Turkey

19th Meeting of the States Parties
November 2021

The GICHD would like to congratulate the government of Turkey on submitting an initial Article 5 extension request of three years and nine months.

The requested extension will be dedicated primarily to a nation-wide Non-Technical Survey to determine the precise perimeter of the remaining mined areas in all affected provinces. The GICHD would recommend that Turkey also consider Limited Technical Survey, for example with animal detection or mechanical systems, to support the reduction or cancellation of hazardous areas, or at least as a quality control measure. Overall, the plan outlined in the request seems achievable and likely to provide adequate information to determine the time that will be necessary to complete clearance operations in the country.

The GICHD commends Turkey's development of a multi-year *Mine Risk Education Plan (2021-2023)* in line with the Oslo Action Plan, and the inclusion of Risk Education as a focus area in *TURMAC's Strategic Mine Action Plan for 2020-2025*.

Given the reported increase in EO victims and the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of risk education, the GICHD invites Turkey to consider alternative ways to maintain such critical activities, also based on good practice developed by the sector, that is available through the EORE AG website. We also encourage Turkey to place special emphasis on risk education for populations on the move in highly contaminated or border areas, to ensure adequate protection for all affected communities.

More generally, we encourage Turkey to ensure that EORE activities take account of the latest relevant standards, notably IMAS 12.10, including in regard to the planned training of local NGOs aiming to increase national EORE capacities.

Finally, the information provided in the request does not clearly indicate the extent to which gender and diversity considerations have been included in all activities foreseen for the extension period. In line with OAP action #3, Turkey is encouraged to integrate gender and diversity considerations across all areas of the Convention's implementation, including the needs and experiences of people in affected communities. This also applies to all steps in the land release process, in line with the gender and diversity provisions of IMAS.