
Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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Item 12 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5

Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

Executive Summary

Submitted by Nigeria

1. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (hereinafter – the Convention) entered into force for Nigeria on 1 March 2002. Since the Convention entered into force, Nigeria has been actively participating in States Parties’ meetings and responding to the obligations of the Convention.
2. In its initial transparency report, submitted on 22 June 2004, Nigeria indicated that there were no mined areas under its jurisdiction or control. However, in its 2009 Article 7 report, Nigeria indicated that it had identified areas in which anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature were suspected to be emplaced. In November 2011, at the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties, Nigeria presented a formal declaration of completion of the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas.
3. Since declaring completion, Nigeria has unfortunately identified newly laid mined areas in areas under its jurisdiction or control. In November 2019, at the Fourth Review Conference, Nigeria reported to the States Parties that it has been experiencing the “tragic consequences of the production and use of antipersonnel mines of an improvised nature by Non State Armed Groups (NSAG) especially in the northeast, causing internal displacement, loss of lives and properties”.
4. In compliance with the decision of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties on addressing situations in which States Parties, after their original or extended deadline to implement Article 5 has expired, discovered a mined area (as defined by Article 2.5 of the Convention), including a newly mined area, under its jurisdiction or control that is known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, Nigeria submitted a request for extension to the 2020 Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties. In its request Nigeria committed to submit for consideration a more detailed request on the status of contamination and of the Convention’s implementation for consideration by the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties.
5. Unfortunately, at present, due to the difficulties presented by the security situation, the extent of contamination is not clear. Furthermore, irregularity and non-selectivity of the use of Improvised Explosive devices (IED) in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) prevents an accurate estimation of the scale of contamination and efforts to identify contaminated areas. However, given the information that has been collected from the Nigerian Armed Forces and humanitarian organizations on the ground, including accident data and population



reports, mined areas are suspected mostly in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States. It is important to highlight that, there are many cases of IEDs as well as a large number of unexploded ordnance (UXO). According to the information registered in the Information Management System for Mine Action, the majority of incidents concern the use of Road Planted IEDs, which greatly complicates travel. At the time of writing, there are no proper records to estimate the extent of the contamination in BAY states. However, it is anticipated that conflict areas contain or are suspected to contain landmines of an improvised nature (IEDs), UXO and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

6. Socio-economic and demographic factors are important in understanding the humanitarian impact of anti-personnel mines:

(i) There is a higher incidence of casualties from anti-personnel mines and landmines among poor and vulnerable groups. Casualties tend to occur among the poorest members of the population because very often they have little choice but to live in contaminated areas and to interact with anti-personnel mines. Research has suggested "... a strong, direct correlation between ERW contamination and poverty" while wealthier households have more options and are able to live in less contaminated areas and undertake livelihood activities that expose them to fewer threats from ERW.

(ii) Men of working age are the group most likely to be involved in anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, other ERW or landmine incidents. These incidents often occur during the conduct of economic activities. Significantly more males are involved in incidents than females. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) reports that of the ERW and landmine casualties recorded in 2006, of which the gender is known, 89% were male. This has been attributed to, among other things, the division of labour in a given community, with men often performing tasks of a nature that will put them at greater risk and the tendency of men to be more likely to deliberately interact with ordnance, either for reasons of social display or because of increased confidence due to military experience. Likewise, most child casualty are male. While this might simply be due to the inquisitive nature of children, especially boys, there is also reason to suspect that this is also the result of social display, as well as the emulation of adult behaviours. In addition to economic activities, there are other reasons why there tend to be more male than female victims. After conflict, men might return home or investigate the potential of an area as a new settlement site ahead of the other members of the family. Therefore, the men are entering areas where local knowledge about contamination has not been developed.

(iii) **Women:** As incidents occur predominately during income-generating activities, the extent to which women are involved in these activities and the division of labour in a particular society influences the proportion of female victims.

(iv) **Children and Youth:** Children and youth account for a high proportion of anti-personnel mine victims. This is partly because they are curious and are less aware of dangers than adults. Anti-personnel mines may be attractive to children because many are shaped like balls or are brightly coloured. In Eritrea, children have used parts from anti-personnel mines to make bells to hang around the necks of animals. Children, particularly boys, are also involved in incidents because they are searching for scrap metal.

(v) **Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** Aside from the direct threat of injury or death, and perhaps an increased likelihood of displacement, the use of anti-personnel mines and the resulting contamination exacerbates the difficulties faced by refugees and IDPs. Likewise, resettlement can be complicated when property and land is contaminated. The displaced can also be the direct target of hostilities. There are instances when IDP camps have been struck with anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature used by Boko Haram operators in North-East Nigeria.

7. **Economic impact:** the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature has an impact on the economy in a variety of ways. Aside from the damage to infrastructure and property, livelihood activities are interrupted or limited because of this damage and lack of safe access to resources. It is significant that nearly all questionnaire respondents identified

the lack of economic development as the major problem facing the country or areas in which they work.

(i) **Infrastructure:** Damage to infrastructure prevents a return to normality and contamination delays rebuilding, thus prolonging the impact of conflict. Following the 1991 Gulf War, the Iraqi authorities claim to have cleared thousands of unexploded land mines, for example from electrical power stations, communications equipment and bridges; and in Kuwait, the restoration of electrical power was delayed because of unexploded anti-personnel mines being found in critical parts of the grid. Not only is it necessary to rebuild infrastructure damaged in the conflict: in some areas new infrastructure is required to enable development, yet a new project may necessitate prior clearance activities. Example, a project to provide water to a certain village was delayed because of anti-personnel mines contamination. Damage to infrastructure has a wide-ranging impact on the economy. In addition to the cost of reconstruction, the loss of air transport for trade and tourism has a serious economic impact.

(ii) **Livelihoods:** The deaths and injuries caused by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature at time of use and post-conflict have an economic cost. As a greater proportion of these occur among males, often the primary income earners, affected households often face serious financial hardship. Victims who sustained serious injury, such as the loss of a limb, who are able to return to work cannot realistically do so sooner than six months after the incident. Furthermore, care for injured household members has either economic or opportunity costs for the caregiver. When a number of households are unable to make a contribution to the local economy, the whole community might be affected. While the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature on livelihoods is broad, it tends to affect agriculture more than any other economic sector. People are unable to safely access land for cultivation, grazing livestock or the collection of resources. In addition, in many contaminated countries, livestock are lost to anti-personnel mine incidents, which can be a devastating economic blow to the owner or the community. Unfortunately, economic conditions often force people to take risks. A negative effect on livelihoods can be seen even in situations with relatively minor contamination. This economic impact of contamination is felt at the individual and community levels.

8. In response to this threat Nigeria established an Inter-Ministerial Committee with an aim to develop a national mine action strategy and a work plan to start survey and clearance of anti-personnel mines in affected areas. Currently, the Inter-Ministerial Committee is comprised of two female representatives and four male representatives from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, National Emergency Management Agency, Northeast Development Commission and National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs. The membership of the Committee will be expanded to include the Nigerian Police Force, National Security and Civil Defence Corps and the National Universities Commission.

9. A number of Nigerian authorities are involved in mine action, including the Ministry of Defence, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, National Emergency Management Agency, Federal Ministry of Education and its relevant Parastatals and Agencies. Other relevant state agencies also deal with mine action activities: the State Emergency Management Agency of the affected States, the Nigerian Police Force, National Security and Civil Defence Corps and the Borno State Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement.

10. At present, due to security challenges, the main efforts are aimed at Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and strengthening capacity of the national security service providers to mitigate the threat of explosive ordnance.

11. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) works with two international non-governmental organizations, **Mines Advisory Group (MAG)** and **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** and a local non-governmental organization **Youths Awaken Foundation (YAF)** working in Nigeria in the sphere of humanitarian mine action (organizations operate

solely through donor funding). As a result of this collaboration, since 2019, a total of 646,422 beneficiaries have been reached across Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states.

12. Despite significant security challenges caused by the NSAG, Nigeria remains committed to its obligations under the Convention, including commitments under Article 5 related to survey and clearance and mine risk education. While the present situation makes it impossible to conduct full survey operation to determine the required resources and to carry out systematic humanitarian demining, the aim of this request is to strengthen coordination efforts, carry out explosive ordnance risk education and prepare the ground works for survey and clearance once the security situation allows.

13. In view of the above, **Nigeria is requesting a four-year extension of its 31 December 2021 deadline until 31 December 2025.**

14. The purpose of this request is to allow Nigeria to carry out the following:

- (a) Establishment of a National Mine Action Centre to address the threat;
- (b) Development of National Mine Action Standards;
- (c) Strengthen coordination of delivery of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education;
- (d) Continue information collection efforts on the threat posed by anti-personnel mines; and
- (e) Develop a national mine action strategy and a work plan for implementation.

15. Fulfilment of the set of tasks aimed at complete destruction of the antipersonnel mines will promote:

- (a) reduction of risks associated with landmines of an improvised nature and other explosive remnants of war for civilians in Nigeria;
- (b) creation of a safe environment, reducing the impact of explosive ordnance on the environment;
- (c) further safe use of cleared areas and infrastructure for economic purposes;
- (d) decrease of casualties among the civil population and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, in particular, to persons, who reside in hard-to-reach areas;
- (e) improvement of the civil population's access to essential goods and services, agricultural lands, infrastructural objects, schools, forests, rivers, recreational facilities, that will have positive impact on the internal migration of population;
- (f) growth of economic indicators, in particular, increase in agricultural production and livestock;
- (g) unimpeded access of humanitarian workers to hard-to-reach areas; and
- (h) decrease of risks of emergencies in connection with explosive ordnance.

16. This extension request has been developed through an inclusive process with partner organizations, taking into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys, men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities.
