

**Statement by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Observations on the
Request for extension submitted by Afghanistan**

Mr. President (Chair),

We, as a Committee noted the extraordinary circumstances faced by Afghanistan in presenting a detailed extension request.

- On 4 July 2022, the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan in Geneva submitted to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation a request for extension of its 1 March 2023 deadline.
- The Committee noted that the request had been submitted later than the established 31 March 2021 deadline for States Parties submitting requests in 2022. The Committee, however, given the circumstances, noted with satisfaction that Afghanistan had submitted its request and has engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee.
- The request is for two years, until 1 March 2025.

The request indicates that Afghanistan is submitting a request for extension of its Article 5 obligations for a period of two years from March 2023 to March 2025 with the view of the circumstances allowing the submission of a more detailed request for extension by 31 March 2024.

We noted the request submitted by the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan seeks to provide additional time for the situation in Afghanistan to further develop including allowing for more time to understand how the demining sector will develop in Afghanistan in terms of institutional arrangements and continued support from donors.

We believe that this is a sensible way forward under the current circumstances allowing Afghanistan to remain in compliance with the convention,

The Committee recognizes the importance of the States Parties agreeing to granting Afghanistan's extension request to allow time for the situation in Afghanistan to develop and, subsequently, once conditions are favourable, for Afghanistan to submit by 31 March 2024 a request for extension containing a detailed work plan for implementation of its obligations under Article 5.

We are hopeful that this will provide sufficient time for the situation in Afghanistan to improve. The Committee noted the importance of continued support for Afghanistan to address the impact caused by anti-personnel mines. We are all familiar with the tremendous impact mines have on the people of Afghanistan.

The Committee noted in its analysis important elements that should be included in the request in 2024 including the importance of the request being developed through an inclusive process taking into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities.

The Committee further noticed the importance of the request in 2024 including:

- a. a detailed , costed and multi-year work plan for the extension period, containing information on progress made, an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with the International Standards for Mine Action (IMAS), annual

projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget based on new funding levels;

- b. detailed, costed and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities that are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account;
- c. plans for the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion;
- d. the humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of the extension;
- e. resources made available to support implementation efforts, including efforts to facilitate operations of international demining organisations and indigenous capacities, and the results of these efforts.

Finally, Mr. President we would like to thank all the organizations which provided the Committee with information concerning the situation in Afghanistan, most notably the Halo Trust and UNMAS.

Thank you.