

Decision on the request submitted by Guinea-Bissau for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

1. The meeting assessed the request submitted by Guinea-Bissau for an extension of its deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with Article 5.1, agreeing unanimously to grant the request for an extension until 31 December 2024.
2. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that, while Guinea-Bissau had not complied with the principle commitments it had made in its initial extension request, as recorded in the decisions of the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties, to acquire a clear understanding of the extent of the challenge and project with greater certainty the amount of time that will be required to complete Article 5 implementation, it is positive that Guinea-Bissau has made commendable progress and has committed to increase its capacity and reinvigorate efforts to garner an understanding of the extent of the remaining challenge. The Meeting further noted that it is positive that Guinea-Bissau is requesting only the period of time necessary to strengthen its capacity and gather and assess data on progress made and remaining contamination and other relevant information with a view of submitting a subsequent extension request by 31 March 2024.
3. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that Guinea-Bissau was projecting that it would need approximately two years to build its national capacity to complete the survey of suspected hazardous areas, resume mine risk education and reduction activities and initiate clearance activities. In granting the request, the Meeting further noted the importance of Guinea-Bissau ensuring that the most relevant land-release standards, policies and methodologies, in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), are in place and applied for the full and expedient implementation of this aspect of the Convention. The Meeting noted that doing so could benefit Guinea-Bissau in ensuring that the humanitarian, social and economic impacts outlined by Guinea-Bissau in its request are addressed as quickly as possible.
4. In granting the request, the Meeting noted the importance of Guinea-Bissau reporting on its remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS, disaggregating by ‘suspected hazardous areas’ and ‘confirmed hazardous areas and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination and reporting on progress in accordance with the land release methodology employed (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance).
5. In granting the request, the Meeting noted the importance of Guinea-Bissau carrying out context specific mine risk education and reduction efforts that are tailored to the threat encountered by the population and are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account.
6. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that the implementation of Guinea-Bissau’s national demining plan will be affected by the level of national and international funding, new

information from survey operations as well as the risk factors identified in the request and noted that the States Parties would benefit from Guinea-Bissau reporting annually, by 30 April, to the States Parties on the following:

- a. Progress made relative to the commitments contained in Guinea-Bissau's work plan and the results of survey and clearance efforts 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 cleared through clearance);
 - b. The impact of survey and clearance outcomes and how additional clarity obtained may change Guinea-Bissau's assessment of the remaining implementation challenge and timeframe for implementation;
 - c. The remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS and disaggregated by suspected hazardous areas and confirmed hazardous areas and their respective sizes;
 - d. Information on progress in building the capacity of CAAMI, including the establishment of an information management system, the development of national mine action standards in accordance with IMAS, and preparations for survey and clearance activities;
 - e. Adjusted milestones, including information on the number of mined areas and amount of area to be addressed manually and how priorities have been established;
 - f. Updates regarding the implementation of mine risk education and reduction efforts in affected communities, including information on the methodologies used, the challenges faced and the results achieved, with information disaggregated by gender and age;
 - g. Resource mobilization efforts, external financing received and resource made available by the Government of Guinea-Bissau to support implementation efforts; and
 - h. Information on how implementation efforts take into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boy and men and the needs and experiences of people in affected communities.
7. In granting the request the Meeting noted the importance, in addition to Guinea-Bissau reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding its implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request and other commitments made in the request at Intersessional Meetings, Meetings of the States Parties and Review Conferences as well as through Article 7 reports using the Guide for Reporting.