
**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 request 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 Guinea-Bissau

1. Guinea-Bissau ratified the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in 2001. In its initial transparency report, Guinea-Bissau reported areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines were known or suspected to be emplaced. In accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, Guinea-Bissau undertook to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas as soon as possible but not later than 1 November 2011. Guinea-Bissau's Article 5 deadline was extended to 1 January 2012 at the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties. In 2012, Guinea-Bissau declared having fulfilled its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

2. Unfortunately, new incidents of anti-personnel mines continued to be reported following the declaration of completion. During the Intersessional Meetings in June 2021, Guinea-Bissau reported the discovery of previously unknown mined areas and subsequently submitted a request to extend its mine clearance deadline. The extension request was granted by the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties and new deadline set for 31 December 2022.

3. The objectives of the extension request were to mobilise resources to carry out the survey activities necessary to get a clearer understanding of the extent of the landmine challenge and to develop an evidence-based action plan. Unfortunately, progress during the extension request period has been limited due primarily to the lack of financial resources. Nevertheless, thanks to the governmental contribution supporting the functioning of the National Mine Action Coordination Centre (CAAMI), the CAAMI has been able to engage in a dialogue with national and international stakeholders, leading to the identification of five key elements which form the basis for the current request for extension:

(a) There is still widespread contamination by exploded ordnance (EO) across Guinea-Bissau. This contamination is only partially known, having never been systematically assessed.

(b) There is currently no capacity to demarcate, mark and remove the threat posed by EO.

(c) There is no functional information system available to support mine action activities.

(d) There are no national standards to frame and improve the safety, quality and efficiency of the mine action activities.



(e) There is population currently exposed to the threat of EO.

4. Regarding the current information available on the extent of the remaining contamination, the national non-governmental organisation Humanitarian Aid in Guinea-Bissau (HUMAID) identified nine (9) confirmed hazardous areas with an estimated area of 1'093'840 square metres, as well as 43 suspected hazardous areas, five (5) battle areas and three (3) sites of spot task (not cleared in the absence of resources). These hazardous areas are spread over the territory and are suspected to be contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). However, efforts to identify these hazardous areas did not apply survey techniques as recognised by the most up to date international mine action standards (IMAS) and would require resurveying.

5. 13 accidents involving 73 victims have been reported since 2012 through informal reporting mechanisms. This constitutes strong evidence of the humanitarian impact of the contamination, the burden that EO continue to pose on the population of Guinea-Bissau and the need to carry out further survey to more accurately understand the extent of the challenge.

6. Based on these findings, the CAAMI has concluded that a national survey is required, using an evidence-based land release process compliant with IMAS. The objectives of the national survey are to:

(a) Investigate and quantify the nature and extent of the contamination at national level, including the refinement of the data of the already known hazardous areas (action #18 of the Oslo Action Plan).

(b) Establish a baseline for further monitoring of survey and clearance efforts, as well as for abandoned explosive ordnances (AXO) and unexploded ordnances (UXO) which also contaminate the country extensively.

(c) Develop evidence-based work plans and evaluate the resources necessary for Guinea-Bissau to pursue the objective of being a landmine free country by 2025 (action #19 of the Oslo Action Plan).

(d) Collect necessary information to support the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address any previously unknown mined areas following completion.

7. Given the current situation, the government of Guinea-Bissau is requesting an extension for a period of 24 months to 31 December 2024. The 24-month request will allow for sufficient time to finalise the survey, carry out an analysis of the location, extent and nature of the remaining contamination, and finally develop and submit a request by 31 March 2024 containing a detailed plan for completion of article 5 obligations built on concrete evidence.

8. Guinea-Bissau aims to accomplish the following main goals during the two-year extension:

- (a) Completion of non-technical survey at national level.
- (b) Strengthening of the national information management system.
- (c) Carrying out of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities.
- (d) Carrying out of emergency spot clearance tasks.
- (e) Implementation of technical survey and initiation of clearance.
- (f) Preparation of a strategy to address residual risk.
- (g) Fundraising.

9. The national non-technical survey is scheduled to take place over the course of 2023. It will determine the extent and nature of contamination in Guinea-Bissau. EORE, urgent marking and spot tasks will be conducted parallel to the non-technical survey. In 2024, the search and clearance capacity will continue and be expanded based on results of the national survey.

10. National mine action operators will be considered as priority resources for a sustainable operational capacity able to continue responding to EO contamination in Guinea Bissau during and beyond the extension request. HUMAID is a key national demining operator.

11. At the national level, no recent investigation on the socio-economic impact of the contamination has been undertaken but an impact survey was carried out in 2008. It is expected that the impact of some of the contamination that was previously unknown continues to hamper the access of the affected population to individual and collective socio-economic opportunities.

12. Guinea-Bissau does not plan to conduct a stand-alone socio-economic survey as baseline to its activities. Instead, some socio-economic criteria would be integrated into the prioritisation process that will be developed (e.g., blockage of arable lands) to guide where the resources allocated to the land release process should go first. The data to provide this information could be part of the non-technical survey questionnaires. In addition, the CAAMI will integrate into its national standards some requirements about post-clearance impact assessment.

13. Guinea-Bissau intends to have a broad integration of gender and diversity in its programme, considering the needs and perspectives of all groups at all stages, and tailoring the standards, national strategy, workplans and activities to be gender and diversity sensitive. Guinea-Bissau will look for a partner to conduct a gender and diversity analysis at the latest in the first quarter 2023 to provide concrete recommendations for enhancing the consideration of gender and diversity aspects into the programming and implementation and to ensure that they are properly monitored and evaluated.

14. Considering the current lack of resources in the country, the CAAMI will look for the support and contribution of international stakeholders to reinforce the financial, material, technical, procedural resources of Guinea-Bissau in its action against landmines and ERW. The primary objective would be the training, coaching and mentoring of national capacities. If these national capacities were to be insufficient in view of the extent and complexity of the work, the CAAMI could solicit international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) specialised in mine action for operational implementation.

15. This action plan however implies some key prerequisites to be fulfilled by the end of the current extension period ending on 31 December 2022 which will be crucial for creating an enabling environment supporting a qualitative, efficient, evidence-based and well documented land release process. They include:

- (a) Development of an information management system.
- (b) Development of national standards in line with IMAS.
- (c) Preparation of resources for the conduct of a national non-technical survey and related community liaison activities.
- (d) Preparation of resources for spot tasks, technical surveys, marking and clearance.
- (e) Resuming of EORE activities.
- (f) Fundraising for the period 2022-2024 (these activities are to date unfunded).

16. The aforementioned issues have been factored in the development of the action plan. The cost for implementation of the plan in the extension request totals **5'688'000 US dollars** for the period 2022/2024. So far, much remains unfunded for 2022 and the following years. Guinea Bissau will urgently need to mobilise international support for the plan proposed in the extension request, whilst at the same time mobilising national resources. Guinea-Bissau is aware that, if there were to be a partial gap or a delay in funding in 2022, the action plan proposed in this extension request would be delayed accordingly.

17. Despite being a country of limited financial means, the government of Guinea-Bissau continues to invest in the mine action sector by maintaining the functioning of the CAAMI through its contribution of an estimated 40'000 US dollars yearly to premises, running costs, salaries. Considering the budget required for the national action plan, the CAAMI will submit to the Ministry of Defence a revised budget included the need for any additional personnel, equipment, running costs for state funding. The contribution of the international community will be requested for funding gaps that could not be supported by the government of Guinea-Bissau.

18. Since 2012, donors have not provided support to the mine action sector in Guinea-Bissau. Equipment supplied to the CAAMI in the 2000's is now obsolete. The CAAMI will undertake a thorough assessment of its equipment and the equipment that needs to be purchased to support implementation. The CAAMI requires as a priority the reinforcement of its capacities, (equipment, workforce, skills, procedures, or else funds) looking for sustainability and compliance with international norms.

19. Guinea Bissau believes that the key to resource mobilisation will be the continued adherence to international best practices, and open and transparent communication with the international community.

20. On 22 June 2022, Guinea-Bissau held an individualized approach event in the margins of the Intersessional Meetings in Geneva with the contributions of the national NGO HUMAID and the international NGO Mines Advisory Group (MAG). Following the event, the Director of the CAAMI was approached by several stakeholders who expressed their interest in supporting mine action in Guinea-Bissau. Guinea-Bissau intends to submit quarterly updates to key external stakeholders, on progress and challenges against the workplan submitted in the extension request.

21. Thanks to a funding from Norway for MAG to support the Mine Action programme in Guinea-Bissau from August 2022, the CAAMI expects good achievements in the second semester 2022 in regard to the plan proposed in the extension request:

(a) In priority, develop the critical national standards (accreditation, land release, non-technical survey, technical survey, explosive ordnance disposal).

(b) Evaluate the best options for the CAAMI to acquire a suitable and sustainable information management system.

(c) Identify national partners and work with them to build their resources and capabilities so as to be able to start the conduct of mine action operations (EORE, non-technical survey, technical survey, post clearance impact assessment) in 2023.

22. As of August 2022, the level of funding was very much inferior to the estimated budget proposed in the extension request for the period 2022-2024. For this reason, the CAAMI seeks to reinforce the mobilisation of financial, technical or material resources for the Mine Action programme, both at national and international level. The CAAMI, with the support of MAG, is going to develop a national and regional resource mobilisation strategy for visibility, funding and advocacy.

23. At national level, the CAAMI's aims to:

(a) Engage proactively with the Ministry of Defence, presenting the national Mine Action programme, the related budget and challenges;

(b) Advocate for an increased contribution of the government to the Mine Action sector, with a target of at least 25 percent of the annual budget proposed in the extension request to be covered by the government of Guinea-Bissau, based on the assumption of political stability, and;

(c) Conduct a stakeholder mapping of development actors and international organisations to engage with them and to identify potential synergies.

24. At regional and international level, the CAAMI aims to:

(a) Organise a resource mobilisation workshop in Bissau in the second semester 2022;

(b) Get the support of the Geneva International Centre in key areas such as governance, risk management, quality management, and/or information management, and;

(c) Continue and develop liaison and coordination with Mine Action operators to encourage, guide and support fundraising.