

**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

**Analysis of the request submitted by Sudan for an extension
of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-
personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the
Convention**

**Submitted by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation
(Belgium, France, Iraq and Sri Lanka)**

1. Sudan ratified the Convention on 13 October 2003 and the Convention entered into force for Sudan on 1 April 2004. In its initial transparency report submitted on 1 October 2004, Sudan reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Sudan was obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 April 2014. Sudan, believing that it would be unable to do so by that date, submitted a request to the 2013 Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties (13MSP) for a six-year extension of its deadline, until 1 April 2019. The 13MSP agreed unanimously to grant the request.

2. On 28 March 2018, Sudan submitted to the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation (“the Committee”) a request for extension of its 1 April 2019 deadline. On 4 June 2018, the Committee wrote to Sudan to request additional clarification and information on the extension. On 17 August 2018, Sudan submitted to the Committee a revised request. The Committee noted that Sudan had submitted its request in a timely manner and had engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee. Sudan’s request was for four years, until 1 April 2023. The 17MSP agreed unanimously to grant the request.

3. In granting the request, the 17MSP highlighted in its decision that, while Sudan had not been able to fulfil the principle commitment it had made to complete implementation by its deadline in 2019, as recorded in the decisions of the 13MSP, Sudan has made commendable progress and has committed to strengthening national capacity, to double its efforts to clear all hazards registered in the data-base, conduct survey of suspected hazardous areas to determine and clear confirmed hazardous areas. The 17MSP also noted that Sudan was projecting that it would need approximately four years to survey suspected hazardous areas and clear confirmed hazardous areas and noted that implementation of Sudan’s national demining plan may be affected by the security situation.

4. On 1 April 2022, Sudan submitted to the Committee a request for extension of its 1 April 2023 deadline. On 15 June 2022, the Committee wrote to Sudan requesting additional information and clarity on key areas of the request. On 25 August 2022, Sudan submitted a revised request for extension integrating some of the responses to the Committee’s questions. Sudan’s request is for four years, until 1 April 2027. The Committee noted that Sudan had submitted the request in accordance with the process established by the States Parties and has



engaged in cooperative dialogue with the Committee on matters related to the extension request.

5. The request indicates that at the start of Sudan's second extension request Sudan had a remaining challenge of 98 hazardous areas measuring 19,285,410 square metres, including 53 confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) measuring 2,418,930 metres and 45 suspect hazardous areas (SHA) measuring 16,866,480 square metres in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states.

6. The request indicates that during the extension period Sudan addressed 19 mined areas measuring 7,926,644 square metres, including 6,965,655 square metres cancelled, and 960,989 square metres cleared, destroying in the process 60 anti-personnel mines, 78 anti-tank mines, 4,222,677 items of small arms ammunition and 70,944 items of unexploded ordnance. The request indicates that during the extension period the town of Abu Kershola in South Kordofan was declared "mine free". The request further indicates that improvements in the security situation in some areas of Blue Nile and South Kordofan have allowed Sudan to carry out further survey which identified 27 mined areas measuring 3,117,930 square metres.

7. The Committee noted that Sudan provided information on progress in a matter disaggregated by area cancelled through non-technical survey, area reduced through technical survey and area cleared and encourages Sudan to continue providing information in this manner. The Committee further noted that Sudan's efforts to implement Article 5 are only part of the totality of efforts required to address explosive hazards and, as such, noted the importance of Sudan continuing to provide information disaggregated by type of contamination.

8. The request indicates several efforts put forward by Sudan to strengthen its capacity including:

(a) Efforts to improve information management by continuing to carry out 'data clean-up' activities with the result of the data clean-up process expected to minimize the difference between areas cleared and the total size of hazards closed;

(b) Review of the National Mine Action Strategy to align it with the current period of the extension request, with consultation of mine action stakeholders and to be approved by February 2023;

(c) Revision and update of National and Mine Action Standards (NMAAS) based on the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS);

(d) Development of five policy documents including on land release, quality, environmental management, gender and diversity and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

9. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan's efforts to strengthen its implementation efforts and to have in place costed and time-bound national strategies in order to fulfil and implement Convention obligations as soon as possible and welcomed further information on the steps and timeline for the development and approval of the strategy.

10. The Committee wrote to Sudan to request additional information on how gender and diversity perspectives was taken into consideration in NMAAS and Mine Action Policies. Sudan responded by indicating that a gender and diversity policy was developed and endorsed during the period of the current extension request, covering Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), Survey, Clearance and Victim Assistance (VA), and that gender and diversity considerations are included in new NMAAS and information management forms and mine action Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Sudan further responded that Quality Assurance Monitoring standard forms also integrate gender and diversity to ensure that efforts in this regard are monitored and reported on. Sudan also responded that training courses and briefings were delivered to the sector in order to communicate the importance of gender and diversity considerations in mine action. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan taking into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boy and men and the needs and experiences of people in affected communities in its implementation efforts.

11. The request indicates that the following factors, in Sudan's view, acted as impeding circumstances during the extension period: ; (a) inadequate funding for demining operations, (b) armed conflicts (intertribal), (c) no-peace-no-war status, (d) new levels of contamination, (e) challenges in information gathering, (f) a lack of and insufficient demining equipment, (g) deep buried mines/explosive remnants of war (ERW) and metallic contents of the soil, and (h) climatic factors.

12. The request indicates that anti-personnel mines continue to have humanitarian, socio-economic and political impacts in Sudan preventing sustainable development, posing a threat to human security, livelihoods and acting as a major obstacle to peace. The request further indicates that from the period of 2018-2023 a total of 171 casualties have been recorded including 29 girls (six killed and 23 injured), 11 women (one killed and 10 injured), 93 boys (19 killed, 74 injured) and 38 men (four killed, 34 injured). The Committee noted the provision of information on casualties disaggregated by gender and age and encourages Sudan to continue providing information in this manner. The Committee noted that completion of Article 5 implementation during the requested extension period had the potential of making a significant contribution to improving human safety and socio-economic conditions in affected areas in Sudan.

13. The request also indicates that while parts of Blue Nile and South Kordofan are still not accessible, more areas have become accessible since 2019 due to the political changes in Sudan and the Juba Peace Talks. The request indicates that, in accessible areas, Sudan has identified a total remaining challenge of 102 hazardous areas, measuring 13,275,840 square metres, including includes 61 CHA measuring 3,313,221 square metres and 41 SHA measuring 9,962,619 square metres located in the States of Blue Nile, South Kordofan and West Kordofan. The request indicates that areas under the control of non-state actors that are still not a signatory to the Juba Peace Agreement remain inaccessible due to security and that plans have been prepared to address the problem of mines once conditions permit. The Committee noted that Sudan provided information on the remaining challenge in a matter disaggregated by confirmed hazardous areas and suspected hazardous areas, and they respective size, and encourages Sudan to continue providing information on the remaining challenge in the manner. The Committee noted that access to the Blue Nile and South Kordofan is dependent upon improvement in security, as well as progress in the peace process and welcomes regular updates from Sudan in this regard.

14. As noted, Sudan's request is for four years (until 1 April 2027). The request indicates that the time requested takes into consideration the need for survey and clearance in Blue Nile and South Kordofan and that the results of survey may impact Sudan's baseline. The request indicates that Sudan will continue to keep the States Parties informed through Article 7 reports and during informal and formal meetings of the Convention regarding; a) changes in security and access to mined areas, b) progress in survey implementation, including survey outputs and the impact of survey on Sudan's remaining challenge and, c) updated annual milestones, including priorities.

15. The request indicates that in the first two and a half years Sudan will aim to complete survey activities in all accessible areas through the implementation of a locality-based (village by village) survey. The request assumes that Sudan has in place the planned capacity and required support from member states and donors in order for the programme to address its obligations by April 2027. The request indicates that three national entities, JASMAR, Global Aid Hand (GAH) and National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD) deliver mine clearance, risk education and VA activities, and in addition to this Sudan welcomes any interested international mine action organisations to deploy its assets to Sudan and assist Sudan in meeting its Article 5 obligations.

16. The request indicates that during the remaining period of the current extension request (1 April 2023) Sudan aims to complete its Article 5 commitments in Abyei, and Lagawa localities (West Kordofan) and Giessan locality (Blue Nile), and Abu Jubeiha locality (South Kordofan). The request includes a two-phase work plan for the period of the extension request as follows:

- Phase 1 (2023-2025): Sudan estimates addressing remaining contamination in Bau and Kurmuk localities (Blue Nile State) and Rashad locality (South Kordofan State).

- Phase 2 (2025-2027): Sudan estimates addressing remaining contamination including in Kadugli, El Dilling and Talodi localities (South Kordofan State) and Jabal Marrah (Darfur region).

17. The request indicates that, given the current security situation, during Phase 1 Sudan plans to deploy five non-technical survey teams to conduct locality-based survey (village to village) and resurvey 187 communities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile within 18 months. The request also indicates that, based on the result of the survey, the current work plan for Phase 2 will be revised and shared with States Parties. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan providing annual updates to its work plan based on new evidence and reporting on adjusted milestones as well as changes in security and access to mined areas. The Committee further noted the importance of Sudan providing updates on the results of survey efforts.

18. The request indicates that Sudan plans to address all mine contamination during the extension period, including nine CHA and seven SHA measuring 1,320,689 square metres in 2022-2023, 11 CHA and 27 SHA measuring 5,259,895 square metres in 2023-2024, 22 CHA and five SHA measuring 5,273,220 square metres in 2024-2025, 19 CHA and two SHA measuring 1,422,036 square metres in 2025-2026. The request also indicates that Sudan has a contingency plan in response to the possibility of lack of access to the remaining mined areas with the re-deployment of assets to address all accessible explosive ordnance (EO) contaminated areas and impacted communities. The Committee noted Sudan's commitment to regularly update the State Parties regarding any developments in the security situation, access to the impacted communities, survey results and changes in the scope of EO problems.

19. The request indicates that Sudan projects that 30-50 percent of all SHAs can be cancelled and based on updated national standards projects that additional cancellation and reduction will take place. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan having in place national mine action standards up to date in accordance with the latest IMAS which may result in implementation that proceeds much faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested and in a more cost-effective manner. The Committee noted that doing so could benefit Sudan in ensuring that the grave humanitarian, social and economic impacts outlined by Sudan in its request are addressed as quickly as possible.

20. The request contains a plan for EORE, including plans to conduct assessments with stakeholders and ensure the application of context specific methodologies and the integration of EORE into other sectors. The Committee wrote to Sudan to request additional information on how EORE activities are/can be integrated within wider humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts, how the "in-depth assessment and survey to establish and baseline and roadmap will include an analysis of casualty data, information on the incorporation of a conflict analyst to ensure EORE plans are conflict sensitive and do not place communities at risk, and risk and assumptions in the implementation of EORE." Sudan responded by indicating that a new national standard for EORE has been developed, including the application of needs assessment, community mapping, and identification, and targeting of at-risk groups to ensure that EORE is tailored to the threat encountered by the population, and sensitive to gender and age, disability and the diverse needs of different population groups and that international and local mine action organisations have been trained in all these requirements. Sudan further responded that EORE activities are mainstreamed in the school curriculum, and training of trainers will be conducted for teachers and community members in affected areas of Blue Nile, South Kordofan States and Darfur region for further dissemination of knowledge among population residing in proximity to contaminated areas. Sudan further responded that plans are in place to institutionalize EORE in health sector, humanitarian, protection and development sectors, civil society organisations, Sudan Red Crescent Society, media platforms including through radio broadcasting and television, and establishing volunteers' networks within affected communities, and that mine risk education interventions will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure their effectiveness in the awareness raising and promotion of safe behaviour among the at-risk population. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan providing regular updates on its mine risk education and other risk education programmes in article 7 reports, including methodologies used, the challenges faced, and the results achieved, with information disaggregated by gender and age.

21. The Committee wrote to Sudan requesting updated information on Sudan's effort to make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion. Sudan responded by indicating that, as part of the regional mine action training centre, Sudan will establish a sustainable capacity within the structure of the National Mine Action Centre /Ministry of Defence to respond to EO contamination after declaring completion of its Article 5 obligations. Sudan also responded that a mine action hotline process is already established and the number is disseminated to the affected communities and as part of the risk education materials. The Committee noted the importance of Sudan ensuring that national strategies and work plan for completion make provisions for a sustainable national capacity and would welcome regular updates in this regard.

22. The Committee noted that the request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request, including photos, further detail on socio-economic implications of remaining contamination, information on land release methodologies, detailed annual work plans for each State.

23. The request indicates that Sudan will require US dollars 61,906,790 to implement its work plan and that at present the Government of Sudan provides an annual contribution of US dollars 500,000. The Committee wrote to Sudan to request additional information on Sudan's plan to mobilize funding. Sudan responded by indicating that a resource mobilisation strategy will be finalised in March 2023 and communicated to the States Parties and will aim to: i) increase donations from existing donors, ii) approach additional donors globally and in the region, iii) increase number, sources, and modalities of donations, and iv) increase national contribution. The Committee noted that Sudan's plan is contingent on its resource mobilisation efforts, consistent increases in international funding received and increased resources made available by the Government of Sudan to support implementation efforts, including through efforts to facilitate operations of international demining organisations. Regular updates from Sudan in this regard would be welcome.

24. In recalling that the implementation of Sudan's work plan is dependent upon the mobilization of significant international and national resources as well as access to mined areas, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Sudan submitting to the Committee by 30 April 2025 an updated detailed work plan the remaining period covered by the extension. The Committee noted that this work plan should contain information on progress made, an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request, a plan for mine risk education and a revised detailed budget.

25. The Committee noted that the information provided in the request and subsequently in responses to the Committee's questions is comprehensive, complete, and clear. The Committee noted that the plan presented by Sudan is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the progress of implementation. The Committee further noted that the plan's success is contingent on access to the remaining contaminated areas that are dependent upon improved security and progress of political dialogue, the need for stable national funding and the mobilisation of international resources, engagement with international stakeholders and the creation of an environment conducive for organisations involved in mine action activities. In this regard, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Sudan reporting annually to the States Parties on the following:

- i. Progress made relative to the commitments contained in Sudan'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) and disaggregated by type of contamination addressed;
- ii. The impact of survey and clearance outcomes and how additional clarity obtained may change Sudan's assessment of the remaining implementation challenge and timeframe for implementation;

- iii. The remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS disaggregated by suspected hazardous areas and confirmed hazardous areas and their respective sizes as well as by type of contamination;
- iv. Adjusted milestones, including information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to be addressed manually and how priorities have been established;
- v. Progress in the development and approval of a costed and time-bound national strategy through inclusive consultations with women, girls boys and men and further updates on the timeline and process for the approval of its national strategy in this regard;
- vi. Annual updates on changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively impact implementation;
- vii. 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;
- viii. Resource mobilization efforts, external financing received and resource made available by the Government of Sudan to support implementation efforts;
- ix. Updates regarding the structure of Sudan's mine action program, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion; and
- x. 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.

26. The Committee noted the importance, in addition to Sudan reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding the 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 its Article 7 reports using the Guide for Reporting.
