



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention 2022 Intersessional Meetings

June 2022

Statement on Article 5 Request Submitted by Yemen (Check Against Delivery)

Thank you Chair,

We welcome Yemen's Article 5 extension request and commend them on their excellent presentation. As always, our input aims to complement that of the Mine Action Review, which The HALO Trust is pleased to support through our programmes, and also membership of its Advisory Board.

We agree with others that there is no clear estimate of location and extent of contaminated land. This is a necessary step to inform costed and time-bound plans and we are therefore pleased to see it prioritised in the request.

HALO supports the request's conclusion that uninformed estimates of the time needed to complete obligations would be unhelpful at this stage. A five-year extension may give time for a full baseline survey of internationally recognised government (IRG)-controlled areas. That could then inform future extension requests.

Survey activities should, however, be balanced with emergency clearance operations, as stated well in the request. It is important that we listen to the context provided by the Distinguished Delegate and recall the significant challenges that Yemen is facing.

As mentioned by the request and the presentation, there are two key obstacles to Yemen fulfilling its obligations. First, the ongoing conflict. Continued hostilities have led to high re-contamination of previously cleared areas, and continues to make many areas inaccessible. Second, a lack of funding for the mine action sector. As we have heard, inadequate levels of funding have delayed efforts to fund operations and build the capability of the national mine action authority.

While these challenges are well-represented in the extension, the request does not highlight a third and significant obstacle to the implementation of mine action operations, namely the restrictions on imports of equipment. Though I note the Distinguished Delegate made reference to it in his presentation, which we welcome.

Arrival of important equipment such as mine detectors and detonators has been delayed due to process, which has in turn delayed efforts to build capacity, even with the availability of funding. Easing restrictions on mine detection and clearance equipment is vital.

Like the Mine Action Review, HALO is also concerned about the limited disaggregation of contamination type in the request itself. Greater disaggregation of data is needed in survey to distinguish between anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination, and on the extent of improvised mines/IEDs. This is not reflected in the request, but will have a major bearing on its objectives, as well as overall humanitarian planning and the work of this Convention.

We fully support Yemen's call for greater international funding. However, the extension request could benefit from a clearer resource mobilisation strategy, including in capital cities, along the lines that the Distinguished Delegate has just proposed.

We also note that the request makes assumptions about the role played by UNDP as the permanent and primary conduit for international funding. This is not a sustainable model and the request could better acknowledge the need for wider sectoral engagement with international donors in order to secure greater levels of support.

To improve the likelihood of more funding, the national mine action authority could work with the UN and INGOs to improve its systems for external oversight, monitoring and evaluation. These will be important prerequisites for donor accountability for mine action in Yemen.

Finally, we encourage Yemen to draw on the internationally agreed-upon Standard Beneficiary Definitions for Mine Action. These have become international sector good practice to monitor beneficiaries. They can also assist in prioritisation activities that have been rightly highlighted during the presentation. We also encourage Yemen to strengthen gender and diversity mainstreaming in the sector within the request.

Thank you and, Yemen, please be assured of HALO's full support.

ENDS