

# Chad's Mine Action Programme: Overview of Remaining Challenges and Needs

## Individualized Approach Meeting

### Final report

15 September 2022

#### I. Introduction and participants

On 20 June 2022, Chad and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, with the support of the Implementation Support Unit, invited state and civil society representatives to engage in an open and frank discussion regarding Chad's needs and challenges in implementing its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, focusing in particular on Chad's current work plan and implementation efforts to complete its mine clearance commitments by 2025.

In preparation for the meeting, participants received a package which included an agenda and a summary of Chad's work plan. These documents will be made available on Chad's country page of the Convention website<sup>1</sup>.

The meeting was held in a hybrid format on the margins of the 20-22 June 2022 Intersessional Meetings.

#### II. Participation

States: Australia, Germany, Japan, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Organisations: European Union, GICHD, Humanity & Inclusion, ICBL, MAG, Mine Action Review and HALO Trust.

#### III. Welcome remarks

Following welcome remarks and an overview of the Individualised Approach provided by **Ms Nana Nagai**, First Secretary at the Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament and Chair of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, **H.E. Makaila Ahmad, Ambassador of Chad to the United Nations in Geneva** delivered opening remarks.

In his remarks, Ambassador Ahmad thanked partners for their commitment to support the implementation of Chad's mine action programme. He highlighted a number of activities in line with the Committee's recommendations following the country's fourth extension request which resulted in significant progress to reduce the remaining contamination in the country: non-technical surveys, mine clearance in heavily contaminated areas with a potential for socio-economic development and a thorough clean-up of the national database.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/en/membership/chad/>

Ambassador Ahmad indicated that with the recent closure of the European-funded PRODECO project, Chad's mine action programme faced uncertainties. With no new financing in sight, he indicated that Chad's government continues to a certain extent to ensure that operations can take place. Ambassador Ahmad called for enhanced cooperation between affected states and donor states, between those that have technology and those that have not, and between governments and international organisations, cooperation that can eradicate the scourge of anti-personnel mines.

#### **IV. Overview of the Chad's remaining challenges and needs**

The Coordinator of the Haut Commissariat National de Déminage (HCND), **General Brahim Djibrine Brahim** offered a presentation on the status of Chad's mine action programme and provided information on Chad's 2022-2024 work plan.

General Brahim indicated that Chad's work plan has just been updated and covers the period until the end of 2024, in line with Chad's 1 January 2025 Article 5 deadline. He indicated that Chad's work plan was developed by the national authority through a participatory process involving all ministries involved in mine action, civil society, victim associations and with technical support from the GICHD and financial and logistical support from the European Union through the PRODECO project.

The plan aims to eradicate the threat of anti-personnel mines by 2025, reduce ERW contamination, establish a residual capacity and ultimately integrate victims into society. These objectives will be achieved through (1) the management of explosive threats, (2) the management of residual contamination and (3) advocacy and communication.

Progress achieved by Chad includes the release of 5,247,806.677 square metres by clearance, 1,013,809.162 square metres by technical survey, and 2,279,560.845 square metres by cancellation.

The update of Chad's database now reflects a remaining challenge of 77,615,858 square metres, including 72 confirmed hazardous areas (total area: 55,937,296 square metres) and 48 suspected hazardous areas (total area: 21,678,562 square metres) in three provinces – Borkou (17 areas), Ennedi (14 areas) and Tibesti (89 areas) - still to be addressed.

Chad highlighted the following as main challenges: insufficient resource mobilization, accessibility issues in the province of Tibesti, climate issues in areas of operations.

Regarding funding, Chad indicated that the estimated cost of the 2022-2024 work plan is 15,604,622 euros and that the Chadian government will contribute to the administrative and running costs of the HCND up to 1,461,756 euros.

General Brahim concluded by saying that the establishment of Chad's work plan reflects the commitment of the country to eradicate anti-personnel mines as soon as possible and at the latest by 1 January 2025. He emphasized that Chad will not be able to reach its objectives if resources do not match the needs expressed in the work plan. To this end, a national effort and increased bilateral and multilateral partnerships will be necessary. General Brahim called on donors and mine action operators to support Chad address the challenge.

#### **V. Summary of interventions and discussions**

**GICHD** indicated that Chad is a member of the GICHD's Francophone Regional Cooperation Programme. Through this programme, the GICHD seeks to translate the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) into French and make them available to national authorities on the IMAS website. The GICHD has also translated other publications that may be useful to national authorities into

French, such as the “Improvised Explosive Device Clearance Good Practice Guide” (translation finalized at the end of the summer) and Technical Note 07.11/03 relating to All Reasonable Efforts useful to the conduct of land release efforts going towards management of residual contamination. Also in the context of the francophone programme, the GICHD organises workshops. The GICHD offered to share the report of the 2021 workshop on improvised explosive devices (IED) with Chad and highlighted that a second workshop is being planned for October 2022. The aim is to continue to promote regional cooperation and build the capacity of countries members of the francophone programme in relation to their response to IED contamination.

**Sudan** compared mine action in Chad to the situation in Sudan and indicated that the lack of funding is also the most challenging issue in Sudan. Sudan suggested that more mutual cooperation could be useful and shared the idea of raising more funds through a dialogue with the international community of mine action donors instigated by high-level representatives of mine-affected countries.

Concerning the development of a national capacity, Sudan offered assistance by inviting Chad to its regional mine action training centre. Concerning the contamination at the Eastern border of Chad with Sudan, Sudan indicated together with Chad a joint clearance project was initiated and then stopped due to political problems and unrest in Chad and in Sudan. The project will resume as soon as the situation allows. Chad confirmed that the authorities of both countries were in contact prior to the Covid-19 pandemic regarding the clearance of the Eastern border and clarified that the Eastern border of Chad is not contaminated with anti-personnel mines but with explosive remnants of war. Chad confirmed that they are now ready for this project with Sudan and have already been working with partners to establish two teams to clear the areas in question. The necessary technical survey has been completed which provided information on the extent of the contamination on the Chadian side of the border.

**The European Union (EU)** as a long-standing supporter of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, indicated that it was pleased and honored to have partnered with the government of Chad for several projects until 2021. The EU highlighted the contribution of the HCND to the development of the mine action sector and to capacity building in Chad. The EU indicated that it still attaches very much importance to the mine problem in Chad and to finding a solution on how to better support mine clearance there. The EU has been exploring other funding opportunities and options since the closure of the PRODECO project and would very much like to see how progress was made on the ground and more results in the statistics. An interest in visiting the country was expressed. **Chad** thanked the EU for their participation and recalled that the EU was the only donor left for Chad and thanks to EU funding Chad was able to clear 60-80 percent of Ennedi West and Borkou regions. He indicated that the European Union had also been supporting socio-economic activities in the Fada and Faya regions helping vulnerable populations. Chad indicated that it was originally discussed that a second PRODECO project would be implemented from September 2021 to 2023.

The European Union indicated that the additional information shared by Chad would be passed on to the relevant authorities.

**Mine Action Review** thanked Chad for the very informative presentation and asked if Chad had considered establishing an in-country platform to help coordinate the mine action efforts, something that would bring together all stakeholders with donors to coordinate survey and clearance in the

remaining areas in line with Action#44 of the Oslo Action Plan. **Chad** responded that work had started after the Oslo Review Conference to establish such a platform but had not been completed and as a result was still included in Chad's plan. Mine Action Review asked if Chad was working to establish a sustainable national capacity to deal with residual contamination once it does achieve completion and expressed the hope that donors in the room would support Chad in reaching this objective. Chad responded that a national capacity was already established.

**Humanity & Inclusion (HI)** thanked Chad for presenting the achievements of the PRODECO project over the last 4 years. HI shared information concerning the hope of Chad with regards to clearance of the Tibesti province, one of the most affected in the country. HI recalled that Chad has benefited from a technology transfer programme experimenting the use of drones for mapping and detection by infrared. This experiment has given encouraging results and the technology could be used in operations conducted in the Tibesti. HI encouraged potential donor countries ready for financial cooperation to conduct clearance operations in the Tibesti, making use of the drone technology, highlighting that HCND staff has been trained and is experienced in using drones. **Chad** indicated that indeed they would like to use drones in the Tibesti as the region is vast, sandy and mountainous and this technology could help a lot with the areas covered by the technical survey. Chad is waiting for funding to use these drones.

**ICBL** intervened in response to the intervention of HI and asked to which extent the use of drones could reduce some of the accessibility issues in the Tibesti. **Chad** responded that drones can be used for technical survey but not for clearance and it would help reduce time spent by teams to conduct the upcoming technical survey.

**MAG** asked for more details on the composition of Chad's national capacity which will deal with long-term residual contamination. **Chad** responded that as of today, Chadian experts have been trained for technical survey and concerning the national capacity, staff has been trained to EOD-3 level and they can work. MAG asked for a clarification of the reference made in Chad's presentation to the national survey conducted in the Tibesti province, i.e was the survey national or targeted on one province, and if Chad still needs to conduct non-technical survey in other provinces. Chad responded that a technical survey needs to be reconducted in Tibesti.

**GICHD** noted that new non-technical surveys will be conducted in the same areas where non-technical surveys were conducted ten years ago. The GICHD asked if, due to climate factors, Chad suspected that areas suspected to be contaminated moved, or if what was considered evidence of suspected or confirmed presence of contamination by Chad ten years ago was not yet well established, hence to need to conduct new surveys. Chad responded by indicating that since 2006-2007, due to climate change, mines had indeed moved in certain regions that a new non-technical survey needed to be conducted in the Tibesti to clarify the situation.

**ISU** asked if Chad thought that a technical survey would greatly help reduce the size of the suspected area and if Chad would be able to cancel or reduce a lot of the suspected areas. ISU further asked if the previous survey was carried out in line with new mine action standards. Chad responded that the survey which was carried out by the HCND at the time was not in line with the new IMAS.

## **VI. Closing remarks**

In closing, **Ambassador Ahmad** thanked all participants for taking the time to talk about Chad and reiterated Chad's concern about the current situation of the programme, recalling that Chad has up to 120 CHAs and SHAs still to address, mostly concentrated in a single part of the territory, the north of the country. He also highlighted the human and economic costs for the concerned regions.

Ambassador Ahmad asked participants to relay this information to their respective countries and organisations and mention how much Chad's relies on international solidarity. He indicated that Chad does provide national funding, despite the fact that it has very limited resources and emergencies everywhere, not to mention climate change issues (e.g. work conducted in the Kanem region is funded by the government of Chad). Ambassador Ahmad ended his remarks by commending the excellent chairing of the Permanent Mission of Japan with which Chad has a very good interaction in all areas not just on concerning the issue of anti-personnel mines.

**The Chair** thanked Ambassador Ahmad for his closing remarks and for the kind words extended to her. The Chair thanked all participants for their active engagement and expressed the hope that the Individualised Approach meeting will help Chad further implementing its work.

The Chair mentioned that the Committee together with Chad would prepare a summary report of the event which will be shared with all participants, aiming to provide further impetus for engagement and follow-up on specific matters that may be of relevance to specific participants. The report will also be posted on Chad's country page on the Convention's website.

The Chair thanked all those who attended and urged participants to look at any avenues in which they can support the efforts Chad.

For further information or clarification on Chad's mine action work plan, please direct all queries to **General Brahim Djibrine Brahim, National Coordinator of the National High Commission for Demining (HCND)** at [djibrinebra08@gmail.com](mailto:djibrinebra08@gmail.com)