

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

### COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Belgium (Chair), France, Iraq, and Sri Lanka)

Intersessional Meetings  
20 – 22 June 2022

#### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY IRAQ

##### I. Progress in implementation (OAP Action #8, #21, #22)

1. Iraq reported that in 2021, the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA)<sup>1</sup> addressed a total of 56 mined areas measuring 6,977,871 square metres, including 2,945,191 square metres cancelled, 2,819,962 square metres reduced and 1,212,718 square metres cleared, in the process destroying 2,162 anti-personnel mines and 6,336 other items of explosive ordnance (Action #22). The DMA also reported that it released 267 areas contaminated with IEDs measuring 103,492,023 square metres, including 93,739,179 square metres cancelled, and 9,752,845 square metres cleared, resulting in the destruction of 9,657 IEDs and 3,329 other items of explosive ordnance (Action #21).
2. Iraq also reported that as a result of non-technical survey the DMA identified 28 mined areas measuring 24,385,054 square metres in 5 Provinces. Iraq reported that the DMA identified 58 new areas contaminated with IEDs located in 5 Provinces measuring 68,226,919 square metres.
3. Iraq reported that in 2021, the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Authority (IKMAA)<sup>2</sup> addressed a total of 634,464 square metres in 3 Provinces, including 196,781 square meters reduced, and 437,683 square metres cleared as a result destroying 1,431 anti-personnel mines, 135 anti-tank mines, 6 illumination landmines (ILL), and 1,840 items of unexploded ordnance.
4. The Committee observed that Iraq reported to be affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature and would welcome additional information, to the extent possible, on the disaggregation of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature from other types of improvised explosive devices (Action #21).
5. The Committee observed that the information provided by Iraq on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2021 updated work plan. The Committee welcomed Iraq reporting disaggregated information on progress in accordance with land release methodology employed, using the Guide to Reporting and in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) (Action #8, Action #22).

##### II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge (OAP Action #18, #22)

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<sup>1</sup> The Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) represents the federal government and covers all governorates except the Kurdistan region provinces.

<sup>2</sup> The Kurdistan of Iraq Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) covers the governorates of Erbil, Duhok, Slemani and Halabja.

6. The Committee observed that Iraq provided a high degree of clarity<sup>3</sup> on its remaining challenge, (Action #18). Iraq reported that in areas under the responsibility of the DMA a total of 360 mined areas measuring 998,679,184 square metres, including 317 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 981,388,638 square metres and 43 suspected hazardous areas measuring 17,290,546 square metres, remain to be addressed. The DMA also reported a total of 1,522 areas containing IEDs in 28 districts measuring 524,264,500 square metres, including 1,187 confirmed IED areas measuring 381,662,714 square metres and 335 IED areas suspected to contain IEDs measuring 142,601,786 square metres remain to be addressed (Action #22).
7. Iraq reported that in areas under the responsibility of IKMAA a total of 3,225 mined areas in 28 districts measuring 210,168,929 square metres, including 3,103 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 180,384,163 square metres and 122 suspected hazardous areas measuring 29,784,766 square metres remain to be addressed. IKMAA also reported 65 areas containing IEDs measuring 2,892,097 square metres, including 38 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 722,374 square metres and 27 suspected hazardous areas measuring 2,169,723 remain to be addressed (Action #22).
8. The Committee observed that Iraq reported to be affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature and would welcome additional information, to the extent possible, on the disaggregation of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature from other types of improvised explosive devices (Action #21).
9. Action #18 of the Oslo Action Plan (OAP) requests States that have not yet done so to identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, and establish evidence based, accurate baselines of contamination based on information collected from all relevant sources. The Committee observed that Iraq was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Iraq on these efforts (Action #18).
10. Iraq reported on its efforts to establish Iraq's baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men (Action #18).
11. The Committee welcomed Iraq reporting remaining challenges in a manner consistent with IMAS, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size and type of contamination (Action #22).

### **III. National plans for clearance and survey (OAP Actions #1, #2, #3, #6, #19, #20, #21, #26)**

12. The Committee recalled that Iraq's updated work plan submitted in 2021 contained a national evidence based and costed plan for clearance and survey for the period 2022-2023 (Action #2, Action #19). The Committee noted that in Iraq's 2021 updated work plan, Iraq projected to address in mined areas under the responsibility of DMA the following: 24,998,203.50 square metres in 2022, and 24,998,203.50 square metres in 2023. Iraq's workplan also projected to address in areas contaminated with IED under the responsibility of DMA the following: 108,559,988 square metres in 2022, and 108,559,988 square metres in 2023.
13. Action #20 of the OAP requests States to annually update their national work plans based on new evidenced and report on adjusted milestones. The Committee recalled that in its 2021 updated work plan Iraq projected to address in areas under the responsibility of IKMAA the following:

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<sup>3</sup> "High degree of clarity" has been used when a State Party has provided a list of all remaining areas (known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines), the estimated size of each area, the status of each area (i.e., "known" or "suspected", and information on the geographic location of each area.

19,624,111 square metres in 2022, and 24,539,139 square metres in 2023. The Committee observed that while Iraq had in place an updated two-year work plan, Iraq had not provided information in its Article 7 Report on annual updates based on new evidence and on adjusted milestones (Action #20).

14. Iraq reported updated information in its Article 7 Report on the disaggregation by types of mines when reporting national plans for survey and clearance (Action #21).
15. Iraq reported the coordination with the Ministry of Planning to include the concept of mine action and the activities of implementing the Convention in the national development plans, strategies for reducing the poverty, humanitarian response plans and national strategies in order to include the activities of mine action within the governmental priorities, including Iraq Vision 2030 (Action #1).
16. Iraq reported that work is ongoing on presenting financial and non-financial obligations from the governmental allocations according to the state policy and its current financial capabilities, and that work is ongoing to inspect all alternative and innovative financing sources throughout the state investment budget, the environmental protection and improvement fund and the reconstruction fund for the affected areas by terrorist operations (Action #1).
17. Iraq reported on its efforts to strengthen partnerships and integrate responses between mine action related activities and humanitarian response plans, peacebuilding, development or human rights plans, where relevant, including the creation of a sustainable development unit within the Department of Planning in DMA to ensure the achievement of sustainable development goals within mine action activities (Action #6).
18. Iraq reported on the integration of gender in its national work plan and strategies, including the activities of the gender unit to cooperate and coordinate with regional mine action centres, UNMAS and implementing partners. The Committee further observed that Iraq reported the inclusion of the gender unit in non-technical survey, quality assurance, and participation in EOD course training (Action #3).
19. Iraq reported on its efforts to make a provision for sustainable national capacity, including the development of capabilities of supervision and implementation coordinated by the Ministry of Defence, Military Engineering Units, and the Ministry of Interior. The Committee further observed that Iraq's trainings were part of efforts to strengthen their national capacity (Action #26).

#### **IV. Efficient and expedient implementation (OAP Actions #5, #9, #27)**

20. Iraq reported on the appointment of a committee to ensure National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) were updated in accordance with the latest IMAS. The Committee welcomes the information from Iraq and would welcome further information on the timeline for approval of the updated national standards (Action #5).
21. Iraq reported on its efforts to maintain an accurate and up-to-date information management system, including plans to check data before the transfer of data to IMSMA Core (Action #9).
22. Iraq reported on its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey, including annual training of national and international organisations on operation efficiency (Action #27).

#### **V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them**

23. The Committee recalled that in granting Iraq's request, the Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties (16MSP) had requested Iraq to submit updated information on several matters. The Committee welcomes the information provided by Iraq on;

- Progress made relative to the commitments contained in Iraq's two-year work plan during the extension period; Geographically specific information on the implementation of survey plans, locations and the results of these efforts and how additional clarity obtained may change Iraq's understanding of the remaining implementation challenge;
- Resource mobilisation efforts and external financing received and resources made available by the government of Iraq to support implementation efforts, including through efforts to facilitate operations of international demining organisations and expanding of indigenous capacities, and the results of these efforts.

24. The Committee would welcome updated information from Iraq on the following decisions of the 16MSP:

- Changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively affect implementation;
- Efforts to resolve political issues which prevent the carrying out of mine action activities in border areas of Iraq; and,

25. The Committee recalled that in considering Iraq's 2017 extension request, the 16MSP requested Iraq to submit to the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties (19MSP) in 2021 an updated workplan for the remaining period covered by the extension request and every two years following this. The Committee observed that Iraq had acted on the decisions of the 16MSP by submitting an updated work plan to the 19MSP and had indicated its intention to submit an updated work plan to the 21MSP.

## **VI. Mine risk education and reduction (OAP Actions #28-32)**

26. Iraq had reported on the methodologies used, the results achieved, disaggregated by gender and age. The Committee would welcome further information on challenges faced in the implementation of mine risk education and other risk reduction programmes (Action #32).

27. Iraq reported on the integration of mine risk education and reduction (MRE/R) into wider humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts, including integration in the United Nations Cooperation Framework Program for Sustainable Development 2020-2024 (Action #28).

28. Iraq reported that awareness programmes are working according to data of contamination surveys, analysis of data related to casualties in these locations according to the risk education plan and that such programmes are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account (Action #29).

29. Iraq reported on the delivery of context specific MRE to population and prioritisation of groups most at risk, including the design of awareness programs to suit the nature of the contamination,, victim data for those locations, and taking into account gender. The Committee noted that while these activities were part of Iraq's efforts to prioritise people most at risk, Iraq had not reported on its efforts to establish an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for MRE/R programmes and welcomes further information in this regard. (Action #30).

30. Iraq reported on efforts to build capacity in affected communities, including local community leaders, teachers, and on efforts to integrate MRE into school curricula for all school stages (Action #31).

## **VII. Challenges in implementation (OAP Action #8)**

27. The Committee observed that in its 2021 updated work plan Iraq provided information on challenges in implementation of Article 5 obligations including:

- a. a shortage of annual funding due to the economic situation of the country as a result of the drop in the global price of oil and the Corona pandemic;
- b. international support directed for clearance work in the areas contaminated with IED, while there is no support in fields of conventional mine areas;
- c. the instability of security situation for the implementation of survey and clearance works in Diyala province and the border strip of Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah governorates;
- d. discovery of new hazardous areas in some governorates of Iraq, the absence of the teams of technical survey and manual and mechanical demining in minefields for international organizations located in the middle and southern of Iraq,
- e. a shortage of human resources working in IKMAA, which effects on the quality and labour productivity;
- f. logistical problems and a shortage of vehicles for teams working in IKMAA which led to a significant impediment to the workflow of demining;
- g. a significant decline in organizations working in the field of demining in Iraq Kurdistan region, which led to a reduction in completed cleared areas in the region and the inability in implementing the plan of the past two years for IKMAA, and;
- h. climate changes such as floods, drifts, an unprecedented rise of temperatures in summer season throughout the country and snow falls in winter, especially in mountainous areas, which affects the quality and productivity of work.

**The Oslo Action Plan country reporting tracker**  
**Article 5 Implementation**  
**Iraq**  
**CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS**

Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 9 August)
<b>#1</b>	# States Parties that report, having included Convention implementation activities in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, where appropriate						
	% mine-affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention						The Committee would welcome information on Iraq's efforts to report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention.
<b>#2</b>	% mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place						
<b>#3</b>	% affected States Parties whose national work plans and strategies integrate gender and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account						
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings						
<b>#5</b>	% States Parties that have updated their national standards to address new challenges and ensure the employment of best practices, taking into consideration the latest IMAS						
<b>#6</b>	# States Parties that report having included mine action related activities within their humanitarian response plans, peacebuilding, development or human rights plans, where relevant						
<b>#8</b>	# States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting						
	# States Parties that report on progress and challenges during formal and informal meetings						
<b>#9</b>	% States Parties that report having a sustainable national information management system in place						

**SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OF MINED AREAS**

Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 9 August)
#18	% affected States Parties that have established an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline no later than the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021 (and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 19MSP)						
	% affected States Parties who report having established their baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men						
#19	% affected States Parties presenting work plans for the implementation of Article 5 by the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties (and MSPs thereafter and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 18MSP)						
#20	# affected States Parties that have reported annual updates and adjusted milestones to their national work plans in their 30 April transparency reports						The Committee would welcome information on Iraq's efforts to provide annual updates based on new evidence and on adjusted milestones
	# States Parties that have fulfilled their obligations under Article 5						
#21	# States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (for the purpose of this indicator: survey, clear and report)						
#22	% of affected States Parties reporting on the remaining challenge and progress made in accordance with IMAS						
	% of affected States Parties providing survey and clearance data in Article 5 extension requests and Article 7 reports that disaggregates by type of contamination						
#23	% extension requests that include detailed, costed and multi-year work plans for the extension period						
	% extension requests that are submitted in accordance with the process established by the States Parties						
#24	% extension requests that include appropriate plans for risk education and reduction activities						
#25	% States Parties that have completed their Article 5 obligations and that submit voluntary declarations of completion						
#26	% affected States Parties that include provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas in their national strategies and/or completion plans						

	% affected States Parties that report having put in place sustainable national capacities to address the discovery of previously unknown mined areas						
	% States Parties that discover previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, that apply the decision of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties						
#27	# States Parties that report promoting research, application and sharing of innovative technological means						
<b>MINE RISK EDUCATION AND REDUCTION</b>							
Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 9 August)
#28	% affected States Parties that report having included mine risk education and reduction programmes in their humanitarian response and protection plans and/or development plans, as well as in their mine action plans, where relevant						
#29	% affected States Parties that report having mine risk education and reduction programmes for all affected populations in place						
	% States Parties that report carrying out mine risk education and reduction activities that collect, analyse and report data disaggregated by gender, age, disability and other diverse needs						
#30	# States Parties that report having established an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for mine risk education and reduction programmes						
#31	# States Parties that provide risk education and reduction programmes to affected communities in the case that previously unknown mined areas are discovered						
#32	# States Parties reporting on their mine risk education and other risk reduction programmes and results						



