
Fifth Review Conference 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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Review of the operation and status of the Convention

Draft review of the operation and status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 2019-2024

Survey and clearance of mined areas

Submitted by the President of the Fifth Review Conference^{*,**}

Introduction

1. At the Fourth Review Conference, the States Parties, while recognizing that considerable progress has been made in addressing mined areas, reiterated the need to increase the pace of survey and clearance activities to meet Article 5 obligations as soon as possible. To ensure significant progress towards their ambition of completing their timebound obligations to the furthest extent possible by 2025, the States Parties agreed that accelerated survey and clearance would provide the most significant contribution to reducing human suffering and protecting people from the risk posed by anti-personnel mines.

2. At the close of the Fourth Review Conference – 32 States Parties were in the process of implementing Article 5 obligations. Since the Fourth Review Conference, the following has transpired:

(a) Two States Parties – Chile and the United Kingdom¹ - reported having completed implementation of Article 5;

(b) Three State Parties – Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and Nigeria - informed the States Parties that they discovered previously unknown mined areas or, in the case of Nigeria, newly mined areas in territory under their jurisdiction or control;

(c) Two States Parties – Burkina Faso and Mali - have reported newly mined areas on territory under their jurisdiction or control.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent developments/information.

¹ The Argentine Republic has referred to the situation of "implementation" reported by the United Kingdom at the First Preparatory Meeting for the Fifth Review Conference, in Verbal Note EOIRS IV/721 N° 189/24 addressed to the Convention's Secretariat on 28 June 2024 and the document APLC/MSP.19/2021/MISC.3 dated 19 November 2021.

3. In total, since the entry into force of the Convention, 65 States Parties have reported obligations under Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Convention. Of these, there are now 35 States Parties for which Article 5 obligations remain relevant: Afghanistan² Angola, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, State of Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

4. While significant and measurable progress has been achieved in the implementation of Article 5, the rate of progress is different amongst States Parties, and challenges in implementation remain. Some persistent challenges States Parties reported include a lack of national/international financial resources, security concerns, border challenges, topography, matters concerning access to contaminated areas, and stoppages associated with the Covid 19 pandemic. In other cases, the continued and increased use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature has been reported as a significant challenge in implementing Article 5. The use of improvised anti-personnel mines has been a persistent challenge since the Fourth Review Conference. Likewise, it is essential to note that in many cases, anti-personnel mines are only one of the explosive ordnance threats faced by these States Parties. These challenges have slowed progress in the implementation of Article 5. Furthermore, while in some States Parties significant progress has been made, in other cases, the slow pace of survey and clearance has resulted in recurrent extension requests.

5. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature committed to “ensure that they apply all provisions and obligations under the Convention to such contamination as they do for all other types of antipersonnel mines, including during survey and clearance in fulfilment of Article 5 and disaggregate by types of mines when reporting in fulfilment of Article 7 obligations”. Since the Fourth Review Conference, 12 States Parties have applied the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Türkiye, Ukraine, and Yemen. It is important to note that the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature by armed non state actors has been an essential factor in the rise in the number of casualties in several States Parties.

6. Since the Fourth Review Conference, efforts have been put forth by the States Parties to raise awareness of the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, including the following:

(a) During the 30 June – 2 July 2020 Intersessional Meetings, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation organised a panel discussion on “Addressing anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature under the framework of the Convention.” The panel discussion was moderated by the Netherlands and included participation from Canada, Iraq, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Mine Action Review (MAR), and Norwegian People’s Aid. The panel supported the efforts of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation to raise awareness of the importance of States Parties addressing anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature under the framework of the Convention and the guidance available to States that face contamination by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature in territory under their jurisdiction or control. The panel also highlighted the fact that the use of improvised anti-personnel mines will most likely continue to be a challenge for States Parties implementing Article 5 of the Convention and that support to States Parties in accurately reporting the challenges they face, including reporting in a disaggregated manner, will be necessary;

(b) During the 19-21 June 2023 Intersessional Meetings, the President organised a panel entitled “The Convention and the threat of improvised anti-personnel mines”. The panel was moderated by Sweden in its capacity as Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and included participation from the National Mine Action Centre of Colombia, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Human Rights Watch (HRW), and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG). The panel discussed the legal obligations of

² References to Afghanistan in this document refer to the period of 1 January 2020 to August 2021.

states affected by improvised anti-personnel mines, what is known about their impact, and the challenges and lessons learned in addressing them. The panel further highlighted that while access to affected communities is a critical challenge, innovative and creative ways exist to address the challenges, including by increasing localization efforts and strengthening mine risk education and reduction efforts before gaining access for survey and clearance;

(c) On 13-15 February 2024, Ghana, with the support of the European Union and the Implementation Support Unit, held a regional conference on the need to address the humanitarian impact of improvised anti-personnel mines in West Africa and the Sahel Region within the framework of the Convention. The event took place in Accra, Ghana, and representatives from all States Parties in West Africa were gathered to discuss how to address the humanitarian impact of anti-personnel mines within the framework of the Convention. The need to address the humanitarian impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature within the framework of the Convention, including its provisions on mine clearance, mine risk education, and risk reduction, reporting, the development of national implementation measures, and the need to develop national capacities were clearly highlighted.

7. At the 21MSP, the then President of the Convention submitted a paper entitled “Anti-Personnel Mine of an Improvised Nature and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention”³. The paper followed a panel discussion he organised during the 19-21 June 2023 Intersessional Meetings. The paper noted that, given the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature and the mounting threat posed by these weapons, addressing the humanitarian impact of this weapon within the framework of the Convention will continue to be a significant challenge in the future. The paper further noted the challenges faced by States Parties contaminated by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, particularly related to access and capacity to implement the provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the paper concluded with the following recommendations:

(a) **Recommendation 1:** States Parties affected by mines of an improvised nature should ensure that they address such contamination within the framework of the Convention as highlighted in Action 21 of the Oslo Action Plan and adhere to the decisions of the States Parties;

(b) **Recommendation 2:** States Parties affected by mines of an improvised nature should ensure the application of the guidance contained in the paper entitled “Proposed rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed,” welcomed by the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties addresses situations in which previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, are discovered after original or extended deadline to implement Article 5 have expired;

(c) **Recommendation 3:** States Parties affected by mines of an improvised nature should strengthen their collaboration to take advantage of the lesson learned and best practices employed by States Parties facing similar circumstances by, in accordance with Action 47 of the Oslo Action Plan, exploring opportunities for cooperation, including international, regional and bilateral, cooperation between affected States Parties or South-to-South, with a view to voluntary sharing of best practices and lessons learned;

(d) **Recommendation 4:** The compilation of up-to-date lessons learned and best practices in addressing the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature within the framework of the Convention in situations where access is limited or restricted would make an essential contribution to the work of the Convention;

(e) **Recommendation 5:** Efforts should be made to ensure that the lessons learned and best practices in addressing the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature within the framework of the Convention are disseminated to affected States Parties and international and non-governmental organisations with expertise in addressing the impact of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature within the framework of the Convention through regional and national dialogues, as well as formal and informal meetings of the Convention;

³ APLC/MSP.21/2023/5

(f) **Recommendation 6:** States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature should, as highlighted in Action 43 of the Oslo Action Plan, disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports, and take advantage of mechanisms under the Convention to support their efforts in this regard, including by participating in informal and formal meetings of the Convention and taking advantage of the Individualized Approach;

(g) **Recommendation 7:** States Parties in a position to do so should provide assistance to States Parties in the implementation of their obligations under the Convention in line with Action 47 of the Oslo Action Plan, including in building their capacity to address the impact of mines of an improvised nature within the framework of the Convention;

(h) **Recommendation 8:** States Parties should ensure that implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities as appropriate, and that partnerships the mine action community and relevant humanitarian, peacebuilding, development, and human rights communities are strengthened.

8. In this regard, it is critical that States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature report on this contamination and apply the recommendation of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties as contained in the paper entitled “Proposed rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed.” Timely recognition of the impact of new contamination and support for these states in strengthening their national capacity to implement their treaty obligations are critical. Likewise, the increased use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature highlighted the need for a multi-sectoral approach. Nevertheless, the importance of observing humanitarian principles in achieving the humanitarian aims of the Convention was noted.

9. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), the States Parties expressed their resolve to “identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, and establish evidence-based, accurate baseline of contamination based on information collected from all relevant sources.” Since the Fourth Review Conference, 30 of the 35 States Parties implementing Article 5 have completed or have reported being in the process of carrying out survey to acquire more clarity on the remaining challenge, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. While progress in this regard has been recorded, several States Parties continue to report large swaths of land as suspected, requiring survey, having made limited progress in clarifying the extent of contaminated areas. Additionally, many of the States Parties implementing Article 5 continue to grapple with some of the challenges highlighted in the above paragraphs. Nevertheless, achieving greater clarity on the extent of contamination through an evidence-based approach is a critical objective of the States Parties to develop clear baselines and comprehensive work plans towards completion and ensure the appropriate prioritization of mine clearance operations.

10. The Oslo Action Plan (OAP) further indicated the importance of States Parties establishing a baseline through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men. In this regard, the following 14 States Parties (43%) have reported this to be the case, including Afghanistan, Cambodian, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Türkiye, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. It is generally agreed that greater consultation will lead to better implementation of the Convention, including in the collection of information and prioritization. States Parties should be encouraged to continue strengthening their efforts to ensure an inclusive process in their implementation efforts.

11. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), the States Parties expressed their resolve to “develop evidence-based and costed national work plans, including projections of the number of areas and the amount of mined area to be addressed annually to achieve completion as soon as possible, and no later than their Article 5 deadline”, to “annually update their national work plans based on new evidence, report on adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports by 30 April each year, including information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to

be addressed annually and on how priorities have been established”. Since the Fourth Review Conference, the following 29 States Parties (88%) have reported having in place such work plans: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. Of the above States, 26 States Parties (79%) have provided adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mauritania, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. The States Parties have highlighted the importance of having evidence-based and costed work plans to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of Article 5 and support resource mobilization efforts.

12. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), States Parties committed to report “in a manner consistent with IMAS by providing information on the remaining challenges, disaggregating by ‘suspected hazardous areas’ and ‘confirmed hazardous areas’ and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination. Report on progress by the land release methodology employed (i.e., cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance).” Since the Fourth Review Conference, there have been marked improvements in reporting by States Parties in this regard. Of the States Parties that have reported mined areas under their jurisdiction or control, 25 (76%) have continued to report on their remaining challenge and progress made in a manner consistent with IMAS, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mauritania, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. Of the States Parties listed above, 24 (73%) have provided information disaggregated by the type of contamination, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mauritania, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. Reporting on the remaining challenges and progress consistent with IMAS and disaggregating the type of contamination and the impact of such contamination continue to be critical factors in ensuring clarity on the remaining implementation challenges faced by the States Parties.

13. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), the States Parties commit to ensure that requests for extension “contain detailed, costed and multi-year work plans for the extension period and are developed through an inclusive process.” Since the Fourth Review Conference, 23 States Parties have submitted requests for extension of their mine clearance deadline under Article 5 including the following: Afghanistan, Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Colombia, Cyprus (2), Democratic Republic of the Congo (2), Ecuador, Guinea-Bissau (2), Eritrea, Mauritania (2), Niger (2), Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Serbia (2), Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine (2), and Yemen. Of these States, Parties, 16 (69%) have included detailed, costed, and multi-year work plans including: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia and South Sudan, Sudan, Thailand, Türkiye, and Yemen. Detailed, costed, and multi-year work plans are a key element of extension requests and the Convention's cooperative framework. In some cases the work plans submitted could be improved to ensure increased clarity and better measure implementation during the extension period. Likewise, the engagement of States Parties requesting extensions with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and other in-country stakeholders is a vital element of the extension request process. It must also be observed that in some cases, requests have been submitted late, which presents a challenge to the cooperative dialogue envisaged by the process.

14. Besides the above, the Oslo Action Plan (OAP) committed States Parties to ensure that requests submitted under Article 5 include “detailed, costed and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.” Of the requests submitted since the Fourth Review Conference, 10 States Parties (40%) submitted information in this regard, including: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Serbia, Sudan, Thailand, Türkiye, and

Yemen. Given the importance of ensuring the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas and the role of mine risk education and reduction efforts, States Parties should ensure that plans for context-specific mine risk education continue to be prioritized.

15. The States Parties have further recognised the vital opportunity presented by the extension request process and emphasized the importance of States Parties requiring an extension of their deadline to abide by the process established by the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties on the submission and consideration of requests for extension as well as to the recommendations regarding the Article 5 extension process endorsed by the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties (12MSP). Furthermore, States Parties should apply the recommendations of the 12MSP, which highlighted “the value of States Parties requesting only the period necessary to gather and assess data on landmine contamination and other relevant information to develop a meaningful forward-looking plan based on this information,” and then submitting a second request containing plans based on a clearer understanding of the extent of the challenge and which projects with greater certainty the amount of time that will be required to complete Article 5 implementation. Applying the recommendations of the 12MSP can support ensuring that the States Parties submit high quality and more realistic requests.

16. Since the Fourth Review Conference, several States Parties, in their effort to align themselves with the 2025 aspirational deadline for implementation of the Convention’s time-bound obligations, have developed extension requests and plans with equally aspirational deadlines, in some cases, of 31 December 2025. While aligning with the 2025 aspirational goal of the States Parties, the reality on the ground in most cases has prevented States Parties from achieving their deadline. The 2025 aspiration deadline set by the Third Review Conference was misconstrued by many as a completion deadline. The sentiment of the Third Review Conference was for States Parties to implement their time-bound obligations “to the furthest extent possible” by 2025. This has also had the unfortunate consequence of completion being perceived as the only success indicator of 2025 and in some cases the great efforts of the States Parties have not received the recognition they deserved.

17. At the 20MSP, Belgium, based on its experience as Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, presented a paper titled “Reflections on the implementation of mine clearance obligations of States Parties and the Article 5 Extension Process”.⁴ This paper highlighted the vital link between the implementation of Article 5 and availability of resources.

18. As a follow-up to the paper presented by Belgium, the 20MSP further invited the incoming Committee on Article 5 Implementation to “assess the Article 5 extension request process and challenges based on the previously adopted decisions by States Parties and, taking into consideration relevant documents on this matter, determine whether there would be a common ground for strengthening the process, including the concerns of all relevant stakeholders in an open, inclusive, and transparent manner, in particular, mine-affected States, and to report its conclusions and recommendations at the Twenty-first Meeting of States Parties (21MSP)”⁵.

19. At the 21MSP, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation presented to the States Parties a document entitled “Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - Extension Request process”⁶ which drew the following conclusions associated with the process:

(a) The Article 5 Extension Request Process is not an end in itself but has been established to support States Parties in implementing Article 5. The process, while not perfect, needs to remain flexible to address several different circumstances that impede the ability of the States Parties to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas. Continued consideration for the national context faced by States Parties is paramount;

(b) The process forms part of the ongoing cooperative dialogue between States Parties to meet their desire of “ending the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel

⁴ APLC/MSP.20/2022/6

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ APLC/MSP.21/2023/15

mines.” Many challenges with the Article 5 extension request process can be addressed by continued adherence by requesting States Parties and States Parties mandated to analyse requests to the recommendations highlighted in the 2012 paper on Reflections on the Article 5 Extensions Process;

(c) It is essential that the process remain state-driven and that any alterations to it align with the Convention's cooperative spirit and further support mine-affected States Parties in implementing their Article 5 obligations. Any alteration to the process should avoid taking an adversarial approach and exerting undue pressure on States Parties;

(d) It is important to avoid adding an additional layer to the process as it stands. As the working methods for analysing requests provide States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extension with the opportunity to reach out to experts at their discretion, emphasis should be placed on strengthening the implementation of the adopted working methods instead of creating additional layers to an already exhaustive process;

(e) The Article 5 extension request process and the working methods adopted for analysing requests in 2008 provide the flexibility necessary for the Committee to implement its mandate of analysing requests for extension, including continuing to ensure the engagement of experts and the cooperative dialogue between States Parties envisioned by the process;

(f) While, in some cases, challenges associated with cooperation and assistance and with the overall implementation of Article 5 exist, many of these challenges and their solutions extend beyond the Article 5 extension request process. Despite this, there may be areas in which the Article 5 extension request process can further support meeting some of these challenges, in particular through ensuring that the extension request process continues to enhance the cooperative dialogue between stakeholders and support efforts to ensure that States Parties requesting extensions will be better positioned to articulate in detail their requirements for assistance and mobilize resources to achieve their deadline as soon as possible.

20. Based on these above conclusions, the Committee presented the following recommendations:

(a) **Recommendation 1:** Implementing previous recommendations and decisions regarding requests submitted for extension of Article 5 deadline. To support States Parties requesting extensions to ensure that their requests for extension contain all the relevant information concerning the implementation of Article 5, including a detailed budget and requirements for technical/financial assistance, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that efforts should continue to be made by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Implementation Support Unit to ensure that States Parties submitting requests for extension of their Article 5 deadline continue to be sensitized to the recommendations and decisions of the States Parties including the 14 recommendations of the Reflections on the Article 5 Extensions Process and the following actions of the OAP which concern requests for extension and the development of work plans:

- i. Action #23: States Parties submitting requests for extensions will ensure that these requests contain detailed, costed, and multi-year work plans for the extension period and are developed through an inclusive process, in line with the decisions of the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties and the recommendations endorsed by the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties in the paper “Reflections on the Article 5 Extensions Process”;
- ii. Action #24: States Parties submitting requests for extensions will also ensure that the request includes detailed, costed, and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.

(b) **Recommendation 2:** Ensuring States Parties submitted complete requests. The Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that States Parties use all the support and tools available to develop their requests for extension and employ these tools (e.g., suggested outline, general advice in the development of an Article 5 implementation work plan) as good starting points, with adaptations made if necessary according to national circumstances. As the Convention’s website is being redesigned, the Committee on Article 5

Implementation will work with the ISU to ensure that a page on the website contains all decisions and relevant tools for States Parties requesting extensions of their Article 5 deadlines;

(c) **Recommendation 3:** Strengthening the dialogue with expert organisations and States Parties. In line with the working methods drawn by the States Parties mandated to analyse Article 5 Extension requests, expert organisations and States Parties have consistently been invited to provide input into extension requests, and the Committee on Article 5 Implementation has employed input received to support their cooperative dialogue with requesting States Parties. In this regard, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that engagement with expert organisations and States Parties providing input into requests, particularly those active in affected countries, continues to take place and is strengthened in cooperation with the requesting State Party and in particular through in-person dialogue, where possible, throughout the extension request process including, where relevant, ahead of the receipt of the request for extension, following receipt of the request and in cases where revised requests or additional information is submitted;

(d) **Recommendation 4:** Taking full advantage of the opportunity presented by requests. While outside of the scope of the Article 5 extension request process, given that a lack of national and international resources has been highlighted as a critical circumstance preventing completion by the requested deadlines, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that States Parties utilize the extension request process to highlight significant achievements made, which in turn can reinvigorate interest in its national programme and establish a sound basis for national and international resource mobilization. In this regard, States Parties submitting requests for extensions should include a clear and detailed budget and assistance requirements. Likewise, States Parties should continue to consider good practices in mobilizing resources;

(e) **Recommendation 5:** Support States Parties in detailing their needs for assistance by strengthening synergies between interested committees. The importance of cooperation and assistance highlighted in the implementation of the work plans presented by States Parties in their request for extension provides several areas for strengthening synergies between the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. The Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that the possibility of establishing a more formalized and recurrent dialogue between the Committee on Article 5 and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance in relation to each extension request be further explored in the lead-up to the Fifth Review Conference when States Parties will consider any necessary alterations to the Convention's machinery. In particular, the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance could be mandated to contribute to the dialogue with the requesting State Party and the analysis of the request for extension;

(f) **Recommendation 6:** Support States Parties in making their needs for assistance known. Given the importance of financial and technical support to the implementation of work plans presented in extension requests, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation recommends that States Parties seeking extension requests take advantage of the opportunities available to disseminate their implementation plans and requirements for assistance as widely as possible. This could be done through informal and formal meetings of the Convention as well as through participation in mechanisms of the Convention such as the Individualised Approach;

(g) **Recommendation 7:** Addressing an increased number of requests. In view of the increase in the number of extension requests submitted by mine-affected States Parties expected in 2024 and 2025, the Committee believes that the key factor in facilitating the analysis process is to make sure that the requests are submitted on time and contain all the information necessary for analysis. However, in the event that States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extension within the short time frame available require increased support, the Committee would recommend that States Parties, in line with the decisions adopted by the States Parties at the 7MSP in establishing the Article 5 extension request process, "provide additional, ear-marked funds to the ISU Trust Fund to cover costs related to supporting the Article 5 extensions process". The Committee further recommends that the

ISU provide a project proposal to States Parties for consideration by States Parties in a position to provide support.

21. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), States Parties completing their mine clearance obligations committed to “continue the best practice of submitting voluntary declarations of completion and give due consideration to the “Reflections and understandings on the implementation and completion of Article 5 mine clearance obligations” paper submitted to the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties which included the following recommendations:

(a) States Parties are encouraged to continue the voluntary practice of submitting to a Meeting of the States Parties/Review Conference a declaration of completion that incorporates the language adopted by the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties and the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties. When formally declaring completion, States Parties are encouraged to provide detailed information on the activities carried out throughout the duration of the mine action programme taking into account the elements included the draft table of content for a voluntary declaration of completion;

(b) In keeping with the traditional spirit of cooperation of the Convention, States Parties in a position to declare completion, are encouraged to employ the services of the Convention’s Implementation Support Unit in the elaboration of the declaration of completion and consider sustaining a cooperative dialogue with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation concerning the content of the declaration of completion, which could lead to an enhanced declaration of completion.

22. Of the two States Parties that declared completion since the Fourth Review Conference – Chile and the United Kingdom – both (100%) submitted voluntary declarations of completion and sought the advice of the ISU in this regard. The States Parties have agreed that the submission of voluntary declarations of completion continues to be an essential part of the completion process. The States Parties further noted the crucial collaborative effort between relevant States Parties, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, and the ISU to support States Parties in unambiguously declaring completion.

23. The States Parties further reconfirmed that areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines cannot be considered ‘residual contamination’ and must be addressed under the State Party’s obligations under the Convention.⁷

24. In acknowledging that States Parties that declare completion may, following completion, identify previously unknown mined areas or be affected by newly mined areas, the OAP committed States Parties to ensure that national strategies and work plans for completion make provisions for sustainable national capacities. Since the Fourth Review Conference, 25 States Parties (76%) have included provisions for addressing the previously unknown mined areas in their national strategies and/or completion plans or have reported on efforts to ensure that a sustainable national capacity is in place, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Peru, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

25. Since the Fourth Review Conference, two States Parties – Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania – have identified previously unknown mined areas, and one State Party – Nigeria – reported being affected by newly mined areas. The States Parties recognise the necessary steps these States Parties have taken in accordance with the decision of the 12MSP as contained in the paper entitled “Proposed rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed.” The situation faced by these States Parties, particularly the need to rebuild national capacities, further highlighted the importance of States Parties ensuring that a sustainable national capacity is in place to address these situations. Furthermore, in several cases, States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines will often also face challenges with other explosive ordnance which will remain following completion of their commitments under the Convention and may require continued

⁷ *Ibid.*

support. Since the Fourth Review Conference, States Parties have acquired a better understanding of the importance of giving due consideration to establishing sustainable national capacities at the outset of a mine action programme and not following the completion of Article 5. In this regard, increased exchanges of information and best practices in establishing sustainable mine action capacities would support States Parties in preparing for completion.

26. During the 22-24 June 2021 Intersessional Meetings, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation organised a panel discussion on “Completion and Sustainable National Capacities”. The panel discussion was chaired by Zambia, Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, and included participation from Jordan, Norway, MAG, the Organisation of American States, and UNICEF. The panel's objective was to discuss challenges and best practices in drawing down national mine action programmes and best practices in establishing a national sustainable capacity. The panel highlighted the importance of ensuring that mine risk education efforts are sustained, integrating these efforts into broader frameworks, and ensuring that a sustainable demining capacity is in place to address any residual contamination, including ensuring the community can report any identified threat. Likewise, the panel discussed the importance of considering, well ahead of completion, the eventual drawdown of mine clearance personnel and addressing the impact of, for example, loss of jobs for national staff of the programme.

27. Furthermore, during the 19-21 June 2023 Intersessional Meetings, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation organised a panel entitled “Finishing Strong – Preparing for completion as soon as possible”. France moderated the panel as Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation which included participation from the National Mine Action Centre of Sri Lanka, the GICHD, MAG, and the HALO Trust. The panel spotlighted the efforts put forth by Sri Lanka to fulfil its commitments under Article 5. It recalled the importance of taking appropriate measures as soon as possible to prepare for completion, what these steps entail, the experience of states in addressing residual contamination, and approaches to mitigating the potential negative impact of completion, in particular, the need to ensure the proper demobilization of demining personnel. The panel further highlighted the importance of involving affected communities in ensuring that no mined areas remain following completion, which is critical. This is particularly important in the context of Sri Lanka, where populations were internally displaced due to conflict.

28. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), States Parties further committed to “Take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance, including by promoting the research, application, and sharing of innovative technological means to this effect.” In this regard, since the Fourth Review Conference, 27 States Parties reported on efforts in this regard including: Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, Iraq, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. These efforts included updating their National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and introducing mechanical or canine demining techniques into their work, amongst others. Since the Fourth Review Conference, the application of emerging technologies in States Parties has also increased. In this regard, continued exploration of research into the application of innovative technology should continue.

29. During the 15 – 19 November 2021 Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties (19MSP), the President organised a high-level panel on “Strengthening localization through capacity building and inclusion: From Rhetoric to concerted Action”. The panel was moderated by Her Excellency. Kitty van der Heijden, Vice Minister for International Cooperation of the Netherlands, and included participation by Colombia, the Iraq Health and Social Care Organisation, the Global Mentoring Initiative, MAG, and the Swedish Civil Contingency (MSB). The panel recognised that a greater focus on the importance of localization, defined by some as “a process where international humanitarian actors shift power and responsibility of development and humanitarian aid effort towards local and national actors, to ensure effective and efficient support to mine-affected communities. The panel explored what localization means in mine action, including donors and implementation partners, and how a

shift in approach can better support localization efforts. The panel also highlighted that local organisations face difficulties accessing international funding directly.

30. During the 20-22 June 2022 Intersessional Meetings, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance organised a joint panel entitled “Making Every Effort Count: Towards a Successful 2025”. The panel was moderated by Belgium and Japan in their capacity as Chairs of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, respectively, and included participation from the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre, the GICHD, ICRC, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. The panel recalled the States Parties legal understanding of “completion” under Article 5 and introduced the concept of “all reasonable effort” within the framework of the Convention and some examples of the application of all reasonable efforts by national authorities. The panel further noted the importance of cooperation and assistance, particularly south-south cooperation, for capacity building.

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