

Analysis of the request submitted by Ecuador 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
(Algeria, Thailand (Chair), Norway, the United Kingdom)**

1. Ecuador ratified the Convention on 29 April 1999. The Convention entered into force for Ecuador on 1 October 1999. In its initial transparency report submitted on 29 March 2000, Ecuador reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Ecuador was obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 October 2009. Since this time Ecuador, submitted requests for extension to the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties in 2008, Fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2016, Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties (16MSP) in 2017 and the Twentieth Meeting of the States Parties (20MSP) in 2022. On each occasion, the Meetings of the States Parties agreed unanimously to grant Ecuador its request for extension. The request for extension granted to Ecuador by the 20MSP was for a period of three years, until 31 December 2025.
2. In granting the request the 20MSP noted that, while Ecuador had not complied with the principle commitments it had made in its initial extension request, as recorded in the decisions of the 16MSP, to complete the survey of suspected hazardous areas (SHA) and clear confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) and carry out the handover of cleared land by 31 December 2022, it is positive that Ecuador has made continuous progress. The Meeting further noted the impact highlighted by Ecuador of the global pandemic which disrupted humanitarian demining operation in 2020 and 2021. The 20MSP further noted that Ecuador was projecting that it would need approximately three years to complete the survey of SHAs and clear CHAs and carry out the handover of cleared land.
3. While Ecuador had anticipated meeting its deadline of 31 December 2025, on 7 June 2025 Ecuador wrote to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation (the Committee) indicating that it would need to submit a request for extension of its deadline. Ecuador, subsequently, submitted on 8 July 2025 to the Committee a request for an extension of its deadline. On 31 July 2025, the Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information. Ecuador provided a response on 4 September 2025. The Committee noted with satisfaction the cooperative dialogue sustained with Ecuador. The Committee Ecuador's request is for two years, until 31 December 2027.
4. The Committee noted that, while recognizing the circumstances that prevented Ecuador from submitting its request in accordance with the process, the Committee recalls that, as highlighted by the States Parties at the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties, late requests impede the efforts of the Committee by limiting opportunities for interaction with requesting States Parties. The Committee further noted that this has also resulted in some analyses being completed much later than they normally should having thus affected the ability of all States Parties to take informed decisions on requests.
5. The request indicates that during the previous extension period Ecuador addressed a total of 31 mined areas measuring 30,092 square meters, including 10,408 square meters cancelled through non-technical survey and 19,684 square meters addressed through clearance, identifying and destroying 418 anti-personnel mines and 56 Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). The Committee noted the importance of Ecuador continuing to provide information on progress made in a manner consistent with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) by disaggregating information by the land release methodology employed (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey (NTS), reduced

through technical survey (TS), or cleared through clearance) including information on the type of explosive ordnance (EO) located and destroyed.

6. The request indicates that, in 2025, no demining operations have been conducted in Ecuador due to recent and unforeseen events that have directly affected the government's ability to meet the planned schedule. The request also states that these events are considered force majeure, primarily stemming from issues related to state finances, which have recently compelled the national government to reallocate the resources originally designated for the demining project scheduled for implementation in 2025.
7. The request indicates that since 2005 Ecuador has carried out regular national Mine Risk Education (MRE) Campaigns in the provinces of El Oro, Loja, Morona Santiago, and Zamora Chinchipe with the latest campaign taking place in 2024 with participation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, Defense, Health, Education, Environment, and the Integrated Security Service ECU911, the Red Cross, and the National Service for Risk and Emergency Management. The request indicates that these activities were planned in a context-specific manner considering the different needs of Indigenous communities. The request indicates that some campaigns have aimed to train trainers by training community leaders (organizations and teachers) from the Shuar Indigenous communities closest to affected areas, multiplying the message within their communities. The request indicates that materials such as brochures and souvenirs were developed in both Spanish and Shuar, carrying the message: "Explosive Mines Kill."
8. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information on the beneficiaries of MRE activities disaggregated by sex and age and on how Ecuador ensures the integration of gender and the diverse needs of populations in mine-affected communities into their implementation efforts. Ecuador indicated in its response that the methodology applied encompasses cognitive, emotional-affective, volitional, and behavioural dimensions. Ecuador further indicated in its response that this is delivered through direct communication between local authorities and trained community leaders to convey the message about the dangers of anti-personnel mines to their communities through group talks, group dynamics, and problem-solving guidance. The request also indicates that activities are planned through area studies and analysis of the behaviour of the population to ensure multi-sectoral and context-specific design and implementation. Ecuador further provided in its response information on beneficiaries disaggregated by gender and age. The Committee noted the importance of Ecuador providing information regarding the development and implementation of a detailed, costed and multi-year plan for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities including information on how priorities were established, methodologies used, challenges faced, and results achieved and include information disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other diverse needs and experiences of affected communities.
9. The request indicates the following, which in Ecuador's view, acted as impeding circumstances during the previous extension period:
 - a) In 2025, no demining operations were carried out in Ecuador due to recent and unforeseen events that directly affected the government's ability to meet the planned schedule. These events are considered force majeure situations, primarily stemming from state financial issues, which have led the national government to make urgent financial prioritizations. These decisions have affected the national planning of resources allocated to the demining project, which was initially scheduled for implementation by December 2025. In response to the internal armed conflict declared by the national government—prompted by a surge in organized crime and terrorism—financial adjustments have been made to prioritize funding for citizen security initiatives.

- b) Recent emergencies related to natural disasters (floods, landslides, collapses, and forest fires), as well as health and epidemiological alerts caused by the reemergence and/or increase of diseases such as yellow fever, whooping cough, and leptospirosis, have also influenced these decisions.

10. The request indicates that the remaining challenges totals 22 mined areas measuring 9,964 square meters, including 2 CHAs measuring 7,009 square meters and 20 SHAs measuring 2,955 square meters in the Province of Zamora Chinchipe containing an estimated 1,713 anti-personnel mines. The request indicates that the two CHAs have specific coordinates and the 20 SHAs do not have coordinates and that information on their locations refers to various military bases that existed during the armed conflict with Peru, which makes it difficult to pinpoint the exact locations where anti-personnel mines were planted. Additionally, the request indicates that quality control is pending for 127 mined areas measuring 280, 031.45 square meters in the Provinces of Morona Santiago (91 hazardous areas covering 219,471.95 square meters), Zamora Chinchipe (35 hazardous areas covering 59,559.50 square meters), and Pastaza Province (1 hazardous area covering 1,000.00 square meters). The Committee noted the importance of Ecuador continuing to report information on its remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS by providing information on the remaining challenges, disaggregating by SHA and CHA and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination.

11. As noted, Ecuador's request is for two years, until 31 December 2027 to fulfil its obligations under Article 5 including completion of humanitarian demining efforts in the province of Zamora Chinchipe and to finalize external quality control of mined areas that have been subjected to clearance in the provinces of Morona Santiago, Pastaza and Zamora Chinchipe.

12. The request indicates that the remaining challenges will be addressed through the engineer battalion 68 "COTOPAXI" employing Manual Demining Techniques as well as Mine Detection Dog (MDD) techniques, following established standards. The request further indicates that the humanitarian demining process in Ecuador includes activities related to survey (NTS, TS) to determine the location, size and other characteristics of the mined areas and that these survey activities will be carried out with the support of qualified and trained personnel, including specialized personnel in geographic information management systems. The request indicates that over the course of 2026 Ecuador will address the remaining contamination and in 2007 finalize the external quality control process for pending areas.

13. The request indicates that the following activities will be carried out during the demining process:

- a. Evaluate reports of hazardous areas
- b. Conduct Non-Technical Surveys
- c. Geographically reference hazardous areas using Geographic Information Systems
- d. Pinpoint the exact location of hazardous areas
- e. Identify concentrations of hazardous areas in affected sectors
- f. Determine the magnitude and density of targets
- g. Cancel areas through NTS with supporting documentation
- h. Reduce areas through TS with supporting documentation
- i. Clear hazardous areas using approved demining techniques
- j. Carry out Quality Management processes
- k. Deliver land release declarations issued by CENDESMI

14. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information regarding the tools and techniques to be applied across various types of terrain and operational contexts, particularly in challenging environments including details on advanced technologies such as drones, multispectral

imaging, and terrain analysis to support technical surveys. The Committee further requested clarification on the role of , if any, of mechanical clearance assets as well as MDDs, specifically whether MDDs are used exclusively for quality assurance or also support other activities. Ecuador indicated in its respond that , Ecuador possesses an MV4 demining robot, which is non-operational due to terrain-related damage sustained during operations. Ecuador further indicated in its response that its extraction for maintenance has been hindered by its weight (5,560 kilograms) and the lack of helicopters capable of external load transport. Ecuador also indicated in its response that Ecuador has trained personnel in georeferencing applications, which allows for precise identification of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and facilitates the establishment of logistical camps for deminers. Ecuador further indicated in its respond that in the Ecuador–Peru binational operations, MDDs have played a critical role, primarily being deployed for the verification of previously cleared areas as part of quality assurance procedures.

15. The Committee highlighted the importance of Ecuador continuing efforts to employ the full range of methods to permit the safe return of land to the population and encouraged Ecuador to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques which could lead to Ecuador fulfilling its obligations in a shorter time frame.
16. The request indicate that the main objective is the release of land contaminated by anti-personnel mines and ERW across the national territory, in order to return these areas to the affected communities and integrate them into the country's socio-economic development potential. The request indicates that Ecuador prioritizes its demining areas based on the proximity and impact on nearby populations and, as such, prioritizes mined areas closest to the most affected communities, leaving more remote hazardous areas to be addressed later. The Committee noted the importance of Ecuador providing information on its effort to ensure that survey and clearance are prioritised based on clear nationally driven humanitarian and sustainable development criteria with consideration for gender, age, disability, the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities including mine survivors, and the environment.
17. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information on its efforts to integrate its demining efforts into broader national development strategies as well as long-term environmental and developmental benefits of land release as part of its strategy to strengthen links with national and international development frameworks and support resource mobilization. Ecuador indicated in its response that it recognizes the importance of integrating the environmental and developmental benefits of demining into national and international planning frameworks including those associate with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the current National Development Plan. Ecuador also indicated in its response that land released from mines not only regains its value for agriculture, infrastructure, and safe human settlement, but also presents opportunities for conservation projects, reforestation, agroecological use, and sustainable community development and that, in this regard, Ecuador could incorporate land release in mined areas as a cross-cutting objective within territorial planning, rural development, and environmental management policies. Ecuador further indicated in its response that the release of contaminated land in high-biodiversity areas such as Zamora Chinchipe has a direct impact on ecosystem restoration, as many of these zones are part of key biological corridors or buffer zones of protected areas which require safe access for sustainable agricultural activities, local employment generation, poverty reduction in rural communities, restoration of affected ecosystems, amongst other. The Committee noted, in this regard, the importance of Ecuador providing information on efforts to integrate Convention implementation activities into national development plans.
18. The request indicates that a total of US\$2,142,751.12 will be required in 2026 to ensure the national capacity, materials, and equipment for humanitarian demining operations. The request also indicates that US\$2,300,000.00 will be required through international cooperation channels,

including bilateral funding and through organizations and programs such as that of the Organization of American States (OAS) to carry out remaining quality control operations. The request indicates that the government has approved a project for land release operations of the remaining areas located in Zamora Province. In addition, all necessary efforts are being made to secure resources through direct cooperation with partner countries and organizations to support external quality control for 91 hazardous areas measuring 219,471.95 square meters, located in the province of Morona Santiago, 35 hazardous areas measuring 59,559.50 square meters, located in the province of Zamora Chinchipe, and 1 hazardous area measuring 1,000.00 square metres, located in the province of Pastaza.

19. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request information on a breakdown of costs of key activities—such as land release, quality assurance, mine risk education, technological integration—as well as specific allocations for personal protective equipment (PPE) and demining tools as well as further justification for each budget line item, including transportation, aerial support, marking equipment, and other related expenses. Ecuador indicated in its response that the budget allocated to the project titled *“Land Release of Areas Contaminated by Landmines or Explosive Ordnance in Known Hazardous Areas Along the Ecuador–Peru Border”* is strictly limited to the clearance phase and that the budget to be allocated by the Ecuadorian State amounts to \$2,047,151.11, which will be directed towards enhancing the operational capacity of the BE68 engineer battalion for demining and explosive ordnance disposal operation through the acquisition of equipment and logistical support to carry out humanitarian demining operations (clearance of contaminated areas) for the safe disposal of landmines and EO. Ecuador further indicated in its response that efforts are currently underway to secure the necessary resources to conduct external quality assurance for the remaining objectives.
20. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to inquire on partnerships with international organizations, in particular on details on the status of the 2022 agreement with the OAS, as well as the support that the OAS and any other international organizations will provide during the extension period. Ecuador indicated in its response that it has benefited from support from various international organizations in terms of training, materials, and equipment and that the funding for clearance operations has been provided through multi-year projects financed by the State, to fulfil international agreements and commitments. Ecuador also indicated in its response that due to the reasons outlined in the extension request, clearance operations scheduled for 2025 could not be completed and that efforts are currently underway—through the Ecuadorian government and international organizations—to secure the necessary budget for the years 2026–2027.
21. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request information on how Ecuador intends to complete its demining obligations under Article 5 within the extension period, including detailed information about the pending quality control (QC) process, the reasons Ecuador considers external monitoring necessary, the methodology to be used, the timeline for its implementation, and additional information on how Ecuador will ensure the completion of the pending quality control process during the extension period. Ecuador responded by providing a timeline for implementation including the personnel required. Ecuador also indicates in its response that according to Ecuador’s humanitarian demining process, internal quality assurance procedures are carried out by the clearance unit once the hazardous area has been released, performed by the Army Engineers BE 68 “COTOPAXI.” Ecuador further indicated in its response that external monitoring or external quality control is conducted by a team of specialists from the certifying unit, represented by the Army Corps of Engineers and that once demining and/or internal quality control tasks have been completed in a given area, an external monitoring team, accompanied by a representative from BE-68 ‘COTOPAXI’, will carry out a final inspection of the land that has been released or cleared.

22. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to provide clarity on the terminology employed, particular “jornada de Operaciones (operational cycle)” and the time period it refers to—specifically, whether an “operation day” means a fixed number of working days (e.g., six days), or a recurring cycle carried out over a defined period of time. Ecuador indicated in its response that “jornada de trabajo” consists of 21 working days followed by 7 days of rest.
23. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information on specific environmental protection measures incorporated into Ecuador’s 2026–2027 Humanitarian Demining Plan, particularly in alignment with the *Ecuadorian Manual of Demining Procedures* and the *Binational Manual* as well as on how Ecuador evaluates and mitigates environmental damage during operations. Ecuador indicated in its response that environmental monitoring is conducted in accordance with national regulations and by designated technical entities and that while, under Decree 1195 of 2017, areas designated for humanitarian demining are granted exceptional authorization for the use of renewable natural resources without requiring environmental licenses, a Diagnostic of Environmental Alternatives and the corresponding licenses must still be obtained. Ecuador further indicated that through its technical manuals areas to be addressed are designed with proper signage, access control, waste management, external monitoring, and administrative planning to ensure environmental protection and operational safety.
24. Given that this is likely Ecuador’s final extension request under the Convention, the Committee wrote to Ecuador to request information on specific measures Ecuador will undertake within the two-year period to ensure a sustainable national capacity to address residual contamination including the management of newly discovered mined areas and the long-term maintenance of the information management database. Ecuador indicated in its response that it plans to establish national rapid response teams to identify and neutralize newly discovered or reclassified hazardous areas and that this will be supported by ongoing training of technical personnel in advanced detection methods, safe neutralization procedures, and environmental rehabilitation tailored to Ecuador’s specific conditions.
25. Ecuador also indicated in its response that it will continue its collaboration with the OAS and other international entities to ensure the provision of equipment, technical training, and personnel accreditation, as established in previous agreements (e.g., the 2022 OAS–CENDESMI Agreement) and that binational cooperation with Peru will also continue, focusing on the management of mined areas, experience sharing, and joint training initiatives. Ecuador also indicated in its response that the national mine information system (IMSMA or an equivalent platform) will be maintained and regularly updated by specialized technical staff and that enhancements will include tools for entering and monitoring new coordinates, clearance status, post-operational safety verification, and document management with funding—either public or with international support—to be secured to ensure data backup, system maintenance, and secure inter-institutional access. Ecuador further indicated in its response that CENDESMI will continue to act as the national technical authority, with support from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, Defense, and Health and will collaborate to form national rapid response teams, provide continuous training in advanced detection and safe neutralization, and implement environmental rehabilitation measures, in line with their respective mandates.
26. Ecuador also indicated in its response that post-clearance monitoring mechanisms will be implemented to detect potential re-emergence of risks (e.g., displacement of devices, terrain erosion) and that internal reports will be generated every six months, and annual updates will be submitted to the Convention Secretariat under Article 7 including clear indicators of progress in national capacity, area coverage, and IMSMA system functionality. Ecuador further indicated that it will allocate resources through the national budget dedicated to demining activities, including modules for training, technological upgrades, and data system maintenance and that a mixed

financing models (international donors, bilateral or regional cooperation) will be pursued to explicitly support the strengthening of institutional and technological capabilities.

27. The Committee wrote to Ecuador to request additional information on the number, proportion, and specific roles of women within the Cotopaxi Battalion as well as how gender and diversity consideration are integrated throughout all phases of operations. Ecuador indicated in its response that the Ecuadorian Army made a pioneering step by incorporating two women as the first female demining specialists in Latin America which were deployed to operations along the southern border (provinces of EL Oro, Loja, Pastaza, Zamora Chinchipe, and Morona Santiago). Ecuador also indicated in its response that awareness raising and outreach campaign have been specifically directed towards women, reflecting Ecuador's continued commitment to promote gender inclusion in mine action.
28. In recalling that the request is dependent on procurement of materials and personal protective equipment, and international funding, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Ecuador providing by Twenty-Third Meeting of the States Parties an updated detailed and costed work plan with a breakdown of costs for the remaining extension period, containing information on progress made, the result of survey efforts, an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with the IMAS and disaggregated by the type of explosive ordnance, annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining requested extension period and by which organisation, matched to a detailed budget. The Committee further indicated the importance of the updated work plan containing detailed, cost plan for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.
29. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the information provided in the request is comprehensive, complete, and clear. The Committee further noted that the plan presented by Ecuador is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect the pace of implementation. The Committee also noted that the success of the plan is contingent upon the findings of survey efforts, international support, and challenges posed by the meteorological and geographical location of the remaining mined areas. The Committee further noted that the Convention would benefit from Ecuador reporting annually, by 30 April, to the States Parties on the following:
 - a. progress made relative to the commitments contained in Ecuador's work plan, including efforts to carry out external quality control, with progress in survey and clearance presented in a manner consistent with IMAS and progress in accordance with the land release methodology employed (i.e., cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance) including information on the type of explosive ordnance located and destroyed;
 - b. impact of survey and clearance outcomes and how additional clarity obtained may change Ecuador's assessment of the remaining implementation challenge and timeframe for implementation, including adjusted annual milestones with information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to be addressed annually and how priorities have been established;
 - c. the remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS, ensuring disaggregation by SHAs, and CHAs and their relative size including by disaggregating between the type of contamination;

- d. implementation of mine risk education and reduction efforts in affected communities, including information on how priorities were established, methodologies used, challenges faced, and results achieved and include information disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other diverse needs and experiences of affected communities;
- e. efforts to ensure that NMAS are continuously reviewed to ensure their alignment with the latest IMAS;
- f. the humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of contamination, including information on casualties disaggregated by gender and age;
- g. efforts to ensure consideration for the diverse needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys, and men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities, as well as climate and environmental considerations in the implementation of the Convention;
- h. efforts to establish its national sustainable capacities to address any previously unknown mined areas discovered following completion;
- i. resource mobilization efforts and external financing received, as well as resources made available by the government of Ecuador to support implementation efforts; and
- j. progress in establishing national rapid response teams to identify and neutralize newly discovered or reclassified hazardous areas.

30. The Committee noted the importance, in addition to Ecuador reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding Ecuador's implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request at Intersessional Meetings and Meetings of the States Parties. The Committee further noted the importance of Ecuador providing updated information on an annual basis within its Article 7 transparency report employing the Guide to Reporting adopted at the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties.