

## **PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY CROATIA**

### **COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Thailand (Chair), United Kingdom, Algeria, Norway )**

#### **Intersessional Meetings 17 – 20 June 2025**

#### **I. Progress in implementation (Action 8, 20, 22)**

1. Croatia reported that in 2024 it released 43,198,951 square metres, including 8,463,471 square metres reduced by technical survey, and 34,735,480 square metres cleared, destroying 1,395 anti-personnel mines, 22 anti-tank mines, and 1,007 items of unexploded ordnance.
2. Croatia reported that 8,520,168 square metres of mined area under the authority of the Ministry of Defence were released, including 750,000 square metres reduced by technical survey, and 7,770,168 square metres cleared, destroying 295 anti-personnel mines, 18 anti-tank mines, and 643 items of unexploded ordnance.
3. Croatia also reported that non-technical survey identified an additional 402,772 square metres of mined area.
4. Croatia further reported that Police Departments, during Explosive Ordnance Destruction activities and annual public risk education campaigns, destroyed 138 anti-personnel mines, 21 anti-vehicle mines, and 3,628 items of unexploded ordnance.
5. Croatia reported Karlovačka county to be free of contamination.
6. The Committee observed that the information provided by Croatia on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2024 updated workplan. The Committee observed that progress in implementation was slightly less than projected in Croatia's 2024 updated workplan. The Committee welcomed Croatia providing information on progress in accordance with land release methodology employed in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and disaggregated by type of contamination. The Committee further welcomed Croatia employing the Guide to Reporting in the drafting of its annual Article 7 report.

#### **II. Remaining challenge (Action 17, 20, 22)**

7. The Committee observed that Croatia provided clarity<sup>1</sup> concerning its remaining challenge. Croatia reported a remaining challenge of 49,335,002 square metres in 16 municipalities and 3 counties, including Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) measuring 43,133,281 square meters, and Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs) measuring 6,201,721 square meters. Croatia also reported mined areas under the authority of the Ministry of Defence measuring 10.1 square kilometres.

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<sup>1</sup> "Clarity" has been used when a State Party has provided a summary table of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines according to regions, provinces and districts including the number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines, the number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel and the size of the areas.

8. The Committee welcomed the information provided by Croatia and encourages Croatia to provide updated information and clarity concerning the remaining challenges under the authority of the Ministry of Defence in a manner consistent with IMAS and disaggregated by SHAs and CHAs.
9. Action 17 of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan (SRAAP) requests States Parties 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 Croatia was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Croatia on these efforts.
10. Croatia reported on its efforts to establish inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men through the “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration” project that was carried out in the period 2017-2024, including a full-scale field survey and the establishment of a comprehensive database, gathering, among other elements, information about the different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages, which will serve future project activities. The Committee noted the importance of Croatia continuing to provide updated information on Croatia’s efforts and would welcome further information on the projected timeline for continuing the socio-economic integration project.

### **III. National plans for clearance and survey (Action 1-3, 18-21)**

11. The Committee recalled that Croatia in its 2025 updated work plan contained information on a national strategy for the period (2025-2026).
12. Croatia reported having a national evidence based and costed work plan for clearance and survey in place for the period 2025-2026. Croatia reported adjusted milestones based on new evidence, including information on the number of areas and the amount of area to be addressed annually and on how priorities have been established. In this regard, Croatia projected to address 49,335,002 square metres in 16 municipalities / and 3 counties in 2025.
13. The Committee observed that Croatia in its updated work plan submitted on 30 April 2024 indicated efforts 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, including through the “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration” project.
14. Croatia reported on its efforts to integrate Convention implementation activities into national development plans, strategies and budgets, including well established priorities and sustainable development covering three major components; economic growth, environmental stewardship and social inclusion.
15. The Committee observed that Croatia, in its updated work plan, reported on efforts to make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion.

### **IV. Efficient implementation, innovative approaches, methods, and technological means (Action 4, 9, 25)**

16. Croatia reported on national safety and environment standards, taking into account international standards for humanitarian demining. The Committee would welcome further information on

Croatia's efforts to keep national mine action standards up to date in accordance with IMAS to ensure efficient, effective, and safe operations.

17. Croatia reported on its efforts to establish and maintain a national information system including the locations of mine danger signs as part of a public Mine Information System (MIS).

18. Croatia reported on its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance operations, including an Agreement on the transfer of tasks between the Croatian Mine Action Center and Center for Testing, Development and Training (HCR-CTRO Ltd.). On October 30, 2003 HCR-CTRO Ltd. took over the activities and projects focused on performing administrative and technical tasks related to testing of machines, dogs and detectors, as well as scientific and research activities. Croatia also reported that the 20th International Symposium "Mine Action 2024" was held in April 2024, an event for exchanging experiences, considering solutions to technical and management problems and gaining insight into the latest technologies in the field of humanitarian mine action, attended by more than 220 participants from 35 countries worldwide.

#### **V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them (Action 23)**

19. In considering Croatia's request, the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties (17MSP) requested Croatia to submit updated information on an annual basis on several matters. The Committee welcomed the information provided in follow-up to the decision of the 17MSP.

20. The Committee recalled that in considering Croatia's 2018 extension request, the 17MSP also requested Croatia to submit to the States Parties updated work plans every two years (i.e. by 30 April 2020, 30 April 2022 and 30 April 2024) for the remaining period covered by the extension. The Committee observed that Croatia had acted on the decisions of the 17MSP by submitting an updated work plans accordingly.

#### **VI. Mine risk education and reduction (Action 18, 23, 26-29)**

21. Action 18 of the SRAAP requests States Parties to develop evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national work plans for survey, clearance, and mine risk education as soon as possible and in an inclusive manner. The Committee would welcome further information on Croatia's efforts to develop a work plan for mine risk education.

22. Croatia reported on its efforts to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas, through the placement of 2,619 mine warning signs and through the delivery of mine risk education programmes (MRE/R). Croatia provided information on how priorities were established, methodologies used, and results achieved, including through the Minefields.info application for smart phones to increase the availability of mine warning information towards the general public. The Committee observed that while Croatia reported on the methodologies used, the Committee would welcome information on the challenges faced and results achieved, with information disaggregated by gender and age and would welcome further information in this regard.

23. Croatia reported on its efforts to integrate MRE/R within the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, the National Education centre of Civil Protection as well as municipalities and cities within hazardous areas, non-government organisations, the education system, and the Police Department as part of, 'Less Arms, Less Tragedies' public campaign.

24. Croatia reported on its efforts to provide context-specific mine risk education and reduction programmes that are tailored to the threat encountered by the population and prioritise people most at risk, including the "Demining and Socio-Economic Integration" project, that established a

comprehensive Explosive Ordnance database, gathering, among other elements, information on different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages that will serve in future project activities / VA activities.

25. Croatia reported on its efforts to build national capacity through the integration of MRE/R programmes with aligned Ministries, including Police Department, Croatian ministries, government and state administrative offices as well as professional groups working with and for adults and children in Croatia, including NGOs and international organizations, pass specific training according to their role in the national implementation of the Convention and Protocols. Croatia also reported that the Croatian Red Cross with its branches (in local communities), Civil Protection Directorate of the MoI and the Association of Civil Victims of Homeland War are active in events and lectures where Explosive Ordnance Risk Education messages are given at municipality and city administration levels, as well as schools and other non-government organisations. Croatia reported on its efforts to provide context specific mine risk education and reduction programmes to all affected populations and groups at risk.

## **VII. Best Practices in implementation (Action 5, 6, 18)**

26. Croatia reported on its efforts to ensure that gender, age, disability considerations, and the diverse needs and experiences of women, girls, boys and men in mine-affected communities including mine survivors, are considered and inform all areas of Convention implementation, including the “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration” that aims to ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men inform the establishment of an explosive ordnance database that will serve to direct future projects.
27. Croatia reported on its priorities concerning agricultural production and environmental protection, including, the protection of forests, preservation, ecological and economic rehabilitation and development and application of environmental standards. Croatia also reported on a number of projects including “Naturavita”, “Fearless Velebit”, and “Karlovac Karst”, “Croatian Safe Steps” , Steps II”, which have been carried out with the highest possible EU and National nature protection regulations, e.g. defining the strict time frames for clearance activities and methods to be employed to ensure that the various species and habitats are not disturbed. Sustainable development and environmental stewardship is one of the key components of projects.

## **VIII. International Cooperation and Assistance (Action 40-42, 45)**

28. Croatia reported on its efforts to do their utmost to commit the resources needed to meet their Convention obligations as soon as possible, including making an annual national financial contribution towards implementation. Croatia reported that 68.3% of funds are financed through the State budget, 31.5% of funds realised through European Union contributions, and 0.2% of funds contributed through the Swiss-Croatian Cooperation Programme.
29. Croatia reported on its efforts to develop a resource mobilisation plan and use all mechanisms to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including efforts to strengthen national level coordination including through annual submission of workplans to the Parliament of Croatia. The Committee observed that Croatia in its 2024 updated work plan included a budget for implementation, including a defined financial framework in place until 2026, including continued national financial contributions and contributions from the European Union.
30. Croatia reported on its efforts to explore bilateral, regional, and international cooperation, including through hosting the 20<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Mine Action in April 2024, May 2024, participation at the Security Cooperation Forum of the Organization for Security and Co-

operation in Europe (OSCE), and through attending the meeting on the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Paris, France. Croatia also reported its efforts to support of the Republic of Azerbaijan Humanitarian Mine Action and Mine Action efforts in Ukraine.

#### **X.Challenges in implementation (Action 29, 41)**

31.Croatia reported the challenge of surveying/demining in forests and forest land.

32.Action 29 of the SRAAP requests States Parties to report on the implementation of mine risk education programmes, including on challenges faced. The Committee would welcome additional information on challenges faced by Croatia in this regard.

The Siem Reap Angkor Action Plan Country Reporting Tracker							
Article 5 Implementation							
Croatia							
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS							
Actions	Indicators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Additional information requested from the Committee
#1	Percentage of affected States Parties that report integrating Convention implementation activities into: national development plans and budgets, strategies and budgets including on poverty reduction, humanitarian response, on health and mental health, gender equality inclusion of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, Human Rights, climate change adaptation plans, environmental protection and improvement, and/or disaster risk reduction.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having strengthened partnerships and coordinated Convention implementation activities with relevant humanitarian, peacebuilding, climate, environmental, development, health, disability, and human rights sectors.						
#2	Percentage of affected States Parties reporting having sustainable national capacities in place able to coordinate, regulate, and manage the national mine action programme including survey, clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance and undertake post completion activities, including management of residual risk.						
#3	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having reviewed and updated their national strategies and work plan based on new evidence.						
#4	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having up-to-date National Mine Action Standards in place in accordance with International Mine Action Standards.						The Committee would welcome updated information on Croatia's efforts on having up-to-date National Mine Action Standards in place in accordance with International Mine Action Standards.
#5	Percentage of affected States Parties that report national work plans and strategies integrating gender, age, disability considerations, and the diverse needs and experiences of people in mine-affected communities including mine survivors.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report national work plans and strategies developed through inclusive consultation with stakeholders including survivors and representatives of mine-affected communities,						

#6	Percentage of affected States Parties that report integrating climate and environmental considerations into Convention implementation activities, including in their national strategies and work plans.					
#8	Percentage of States Parties that submit Article 7 reports by 30 April of each year.					
	Percentage of States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting.					
#9	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having a national, centrally-managed information management system in place containing up-to-date information on implementation at the national level.					

SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OF MINED AREAS							
Actions	Indicators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Additional information requested from the Committee
#17	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having established an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline, including in areas affected by improvised anti-personnel mines in line with IMAS.						The Committee would welcome updated information from Croatia on its efforts to establish an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline.
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having established a baseline through inclusive consultations.						The Committee would welcome updated information on Croatia's efforts to report having established a baseline through inclusive consultations.
#18	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having in place evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national work plans for survey and clearance.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report in their Article 7 reports updates to their national work plans, including adjusted milestones based on new evidence, including budgets for implementation, and requirements for assistance						
#19	Number of affected States Parties that report on the inclusion of humanitarian and sustainable development criteria in survey, clearance, planning, and prioritisation.						
	Number of affected States Parties that report on the consideration of inclusion of gender, age, disability, the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities including mine survivors, climate, and environment in survey and clearance planning and prioritisation.						
#20	Number of affected States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature including in survey and clearance operations under Article 5.						

	Number of affected States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature to reporting obligations under Article 7.						
#21	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having a national capacity in place to implement the Convention and address any previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas discovered following completion.						
	Number of States Parties that following completion, report the discovery of previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas.						
#22	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on their remaining challenge in a manner disaggregated by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on progress made to address mined areas in accordance with the land release methodology employed (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance).						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report in a disaggregated manner by type of contamination.						
#23	Percentage of extension requests submitted that include detailed, evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and multi-year plans for survey and clearance.						
	Percentage of extension requests submitted that ensure consideration for gender, age, disability, the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities including mine survivors, as well as climate, and the environment.						
#24	Number of affected States Parties that declare completion of their Article 5 obligations.						
	Percentage of these States Parties that submit voluntary Declarations of Completion.						
#25	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on efforts to improve effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on research, analysis, and the adoption of innovative approaches, methods, and technological means to improve effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance.						



MINE RISK EDUCATION AND REDUCTION							
Actions	Indicators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Additional information requested from the Committee
#18	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having in place evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national work plans for mine risk education;						The Committee would welcome updated information from Croatia on its efforts on having in place evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national work plans for mine risk education.
#23	Percentage of extension requests submitted that include detailed, evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and multi-year plans for risk education activities.						
#26	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having integrated mine risk education and reduction programmes within wider plans for humanitarian response and protection, development, health, mental health, climate, the environment, education, and/or disaster risk reduction or other relevant plans; as well as within survey, clearance and victim assistance activities.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on efforts to reduce the affected population's risk-taking behaviour and to increase knowledge and awareness.						
#27	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having established an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for mine risk education and reduction programmes tailored to the threat encountered by the population and which prioritises people most at risk.						
#28	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having sustainable national capacities in place to deliver mine risk education and reduction programmes in case previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas are discovered and/or in emergency settings.						
#29	Percentage of affected States Parties that report carrying out mine risk education and reduction programmes including information on how priorities are established, methodologies used (e.g. interpersonal, mass, or digital media), challenges faced, and results achieved and included information disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other relevant factors.						The Committee would welcome updated information from Croatia on its efforts to report on the implementation of mine risk education programmes, including on challenges faced.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE							
Actions	Indicators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Additional information requested from the Committee
40	Percentage of affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of survey and clearance;						
	Percentage of States Parties that report on exploring all possible sources of funding, including conventional and alternative/innovative sources and mechanisms of funding or that report having innovative financial projects in place.						
41	Percentage of affected States Parties that report on progress, challenges in implementation, and requirements for assistance.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having a resource mobilisation plan in place.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that have taken advantage of the Individualised Approach.						
42	Percentage of affected States Parties that report efforts to strengthen national coordination with national and international stakeholders and States Parties in a position to provide assistance.						
	Percentage of affected States Parties that report having established a National Mine Action Platform.						The Committee would welcome further information from Croatia on its efforts to establish a national mine action platform.
45	Number of States Parties that report sharing national experiences, best practices, and lessons learnt through international, regional, and bilateral cooperation.						
	Number of States Parties that report sharing scientific, methodological, and technological expertise to strengthen the Convention's implementation.						

