# Meeting 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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**Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5**

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## Analysis of the request submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina 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 (Chair), Bulgaria, Burkina Faso and Norway)

### Background

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Convention on 8 September 1998 and the Convention entered into force for Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 March 1999. In its initial transparency report submitted on 1 February 2000, Bosnia and Herzegovina reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Bosnia and Herzegovina was obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines under its jurisdiction or control by 1 March 2009. Since this time, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted requests for extension to the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties in 2008, the Seventeenth Meetings of the States Parties in 2018, the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties (18MSP) in 2020. On each occasion, the Meeting of the States Parties agreed unanimously to grant Bosnia and Herzegovina its request for extension. The request for extension granted to Bosnia and Herzegovina by the 18MSP was for six years, until 1 March 2027.

2. In granting Bosnia and Herzegovina's request, the 18MSP noted that, while Bosnia and Herzegovina had largely complied with the commitments, Bosnia and Herzegovina has an incomplete picture of the remaining challenges. The Meeting noted that a more accurate estimate of the amount of time and resources required to complete implementation of Article 5 will only be progressively acquired as survey activities continue.

3. On 31 March 2026, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation ("the Committee") a request for an extension of its deadline. On 26 June 2026, the Committee wrote to Bosnia and Herzegovina to request additional information. On 23 July 2026, Bosnia and Herzegovina provided a response to the questions posed by the Committee, as well as a revised request for extension incorporating its responses. The Committee noted with satisfaction that Bosnia and Herzegovina had submitted its request in a timely manner and had engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee. Bosnia and Herzegovina's request is for five years, until 1 March 2032.



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4. The request indicates that at the beginning of the period covered by Bosnia and Herzegovina's request submitted to the 18MSP, the remaining challenge consisted of 488 mine suspected areas (MSA)[1] measuring 966,686,086 square metres including 799 confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) measuring 20,747,593 square metres and suspected hazardous areas (SHA) measuring 945,938,493 square metres.

## Progress in implementation

5. The request indicates that during the previous extension period Bosnia and Herzegovina released 195,998,570 square metres, including 149,053,993 square metres cancelled, 43,530,307 square metres reduced, and 3,414,270 square metres cleared, resulting in the destruction of 13,315 anti-personnel mines (AP mines), and 11,455 items of explosive remnants of war (ERW). The Committee welcomed Bosnia and Herzegovina providing 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 addressed through clearance) including information on the type of explosive ordnance (EO) located and destroyed. The Committee further noted with satisfaction that Bosnia and Herzegovina is employing the full range of methods to permit the safe return of land to the population and encouraged Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue seeking improved land release methodologies which could lead to Bosnia and Herzegovina fulfilling its obligations in a shorter time frame.

6. The request also indicates that, during non-technical survey activities conducted in the extension period, Bosnia and Herzegovina identified an additional 4,250,000 square metres of contamination. The Committee recalled the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting implementation progress disaggregated by type of contamination to provide greater clarity on the remaining challenges.

7. The request indicates that in 2024 the following chapters of national mine action standards (NMAS) and standard operating procedures (SOP) were adopted and approved by the Demining Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Land Release, Non-Technical Survey, Technical Survey and Clearance, Quality Management, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, and a SOP for Mine Action - Non-Technical Survey. The request also indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina provides for the development of a dedicated chapter, in accordance with IMAS 07.13, addressing environmental protection, including, but not limited to; avoiding the establishment of worksites on land used for agricultural production, restrictions on the use of machinery to designated areas and avoiding the use of machinery within 30 metres or riverbanks, artificial channels, waterlogged soils and wetland habitats. The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting on effort to keep NMAS up to date in accordance with IMAS to ensure efficient, effective, and safe operations.

8. The request indicates that, during the previous extension period, mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina was financed with 197.48 million Bosnia-Herzegovina Convertible Marks (BAM) against a target of 272.50 million BAM (72%), including 104.09 million BAM (53%) allocated from State, entity, cantonal and municipal budgets, as well as public- and private-sector budgets, and 93.39 million BAM (47%) from donors and partner countries. The request also indicates that, during the previous extension period, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) withdrew because of a lack of direct grants. The Committee noted the challenges faced by Bosnia and Herzegovina and the importance of ensuring sustainable resourcing of national capacities to support implementation.

9. The request indicates that, during the previous extension period, Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities reached 236,818 people. The request indicates that risk education is implemented based on national standards and standard operating procedures (SOPs) through public dissemination, education, liaison between mine action organisations

[1] Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated that a mine suspected areas is: "An area made up of SHAs and CHAs which encompasses one or more impacted communities and due to economic, cultural or geographical and other reasons is selected as a logical unit…MSA represents an organisational task for a demining organisation."

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and affected communities, and the primary-school curriculum. The request also indicates that mine risk education for refugees was carried out by the International Organisation for Migration, under the supervision of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre. (BHMAC). The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's reporting on the methodologies used, challenges faced and results achieved, including information disaggregated by gender and age.

10. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina monitors the demographic characteristics of mine victims and beneficiaries of EORE programmes, and that when establishing priorities for clearance and EORE, consultations are conducted with local communities, municipal and city authorities, organisations of persons with disabilities, civil society organisations, mine survivors' associations, women's organisations and other relevant stakeholders. The request indicates that particular attention will be given to ensuring access to information for persons living in remote rural areas, as well as for persons requiring accessible forms of communication.

## Circumstances which impede the ability of the State Party to destroy all the anti-personnel mines in mined areas

11. The request indicates the following factors which, in Bosnia and Herzegovina's view, impeding circumstances during the extension period: (a) the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) a lack of financial resources; (c) the magnitude of the mine problem; (d) difficult terrain; (e) a decreasing number of credible witnesses to wartime events and sources of information about the precise location of mine contamination; (f) the incomplete IMSMA Core information system; and (g) the withdrawal of some donors and international non-governmental organisations, including NPA and MAG.

## Remaining Challenge

12. The request indicates a remaining challenge of 439 SHAs measuring 774,690,516 square meters. The Committee noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting its remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS, by disaggregating by SHA and CHA and their relative size including by disaggregating between the type of contamination to ensure increased clarity on the remaining challenges.

## The humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of the extension

13. The request indicates that during the period from 2015 to 2025 there were 34 casualties with 18 injuries and 16 fatalities (i.e., 33 males, one female, two of which were children). The request highlights the socioeconomic impact of anti-personnel mines, including a total of 1,413 mine affected communities (2020), representing an estimated 825,053 residents (22.68%) of the population. The request indicates three categories of priority, i) repatriation, housing and reconstruction of settlements and public infrastructure, ii) periphery population use areas, and iii) areas located between confrontation lines that do not contain strategically significant natural resources. The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's efforts to ensure that activities 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. The Committee further welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina providing information on landmine casualties disaggregated by gender and age. The Committee noted that progress under Article 5 during the extension period could significantly enhance human safety and socioeconomic conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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## The duration of the proposed extension and justification

14. As noted, Bosnia and Herzegovina's request is for a five-year period until 1 March 2032. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina does not foresee completing its Article 5 obligations during this period. Instead, the extension is intended to support implementation of the activities highlighted in the work plan and to improve the definition of the remaining challenge, allowing Bosnia and Herzegovina to estimate with greater certainty the time and resources required for completion. The decision to request a five-year extension reflects experience showing that longer timeframes would be unrealistic for objective planning and forecasting. The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's application of the understanding of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties, which recognised the "value of States Parties requesting only the period of time necessary to gather and assess data on landmine contamination and other relevant information with a view to develop a meaningful forward-looking plan based on this information," followed by a subsequent request containing plans based on a clearer understanding of the challenge and projecting with greater certainty the time required to complete Article 5 implementation.

## Implementation plan and milestones

15. The request contains a detailed, evidence-based, costed, context-specific and multi-year work plan for survey and clearance. The work plan projects that Bosnia and Herzegovina will address 275,000,000 square metres during 2027–2030, with an annual milestone of 55,000,000 square metres. The request indicates that current demining capacity should allow the annual land-release target to be met in 2027 and partly met in 2028, after which at least 52 million BAM (25 million EUR) will be required through 2032 to sustain and expand national demining capabilities. Non-technical survey remains under the exclusive mandate of BHMAC, with dedicated budgetary resources already in place. Annual targets are based on recent performance: 52.74 square kilometres were released in 2022, 52.43 square kilometres in 2025 and 17.052 square kilometres by mid-2026, representing 23% of the annual plan. The request further indicates that lessons learned from implementing the Land Release concept show that, depending on the type of mine-suspected area and terrain, approximately 20% of the suspected hazardous area is subjected to technical methods, comprising technical survey for 18% and clearance for 2%.

16. The request indicates that as of January 2026, Bosnia and Herzegovina has 16 accredited mine action organisations with a total of 478 deminers. The request indicates that the withdrawal of NPA and MAG is expected to reduce Bosnia and Herzegovina's annual land release capacity by an estimated 12% of the projected land release targets. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina will consider engaging the Armed Forces to carry out non-technical survey beginning in 2027, as provided by the Draft Law on Mine Action, Article 27, paragraph (5), that "BHMAC may entrust non-technical survey (NTS) activities to an accredited governmental mine action organisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina". The Committee welcomes the consideration of increased engagements by national authorities and noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina providing updated information on the timeline and process for the recruitment, training, deployment and prioritisation of non-technical survey to be carried out by the Armed Forces.

17. The request indicates that the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina is engaged in discussions with Croatia to transfer knowledge and technical expertise following Croatia's successful completion of its national demining programme. Croatia's experience is expected to provide valuable guidance for Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in strategic planning, system organisation, the use of specialised capacities, the clearance of remaining mine-suspected areas and the development of practical cooperation models that could make mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina more efficient and faster. The request further indicates that one of the models being considered to improve the non-technical survey process is based on the experience of the Republic of Croatia and that implementation is planned to begin in 2027.

18. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina received a proposal from Croatia-based demining organisations to clear areas bordering the Republic of Croatia. BHMAC identified five mine-suspected areas in border regions to promote cross-border cooperation

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and advocate financing for the clearance of mined areas with predominantly Croatian populations. The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's collaboration with Croatia and noted the importance of continuing to explore opportunities for international, regional and bilateral cooperation, including cooperation between affected States Parties and triangular cooperation for the voluntary sharing of national experience and good practices.

## Mine Risk Education and Risk Reduction

19. The request includes a multi-year work plan for EORE for the period of the extension including annual EORE activities, and the estimated number of beneficiaries. The request indicates that 12 organisations have been accredited to deliver EORE and that EORE will serve as the primary risk mitigation measure in communities where survey and clearance activities are planned to take place. The request also indicates that emergency marking of SHAs will be carried out by NTS teams. The work plan further indicates that BHMAC in cooperation with the Ministries of Education and Science will work at integrating gender and age sensitive MRE activities, organised and conducted for fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth grades in all primary schools nationwide. The request indicates consultations will be conducted with local communities, municipal and city authorities, organisations of persons with disabilities, civil society organisations, mine survivors' associations, women's organisations and other relevant stakeholders to inform priorities for clearance and EORE, taking into account public safety, socio-economic needs, development projects, access to agricultural land, infrastructure, educational institutions and other public services.

20. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina collects, analyses and disaggregates data on mine-related accidents by sex and age to identify accident patterns and inform EORE activities that take account of gender-related risk behaviours and other diversity factors. The Committee welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's provision of information on how priorities are established and which methodologies are used, including interpersonal, mass and digital media. It also welcomes reporting on the results achieved, including information disaggregated by gender, age, disability and other relevant factors.

## Gender and environment

21. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina recognises that the effective implementation of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention requires the systematic integration of the principles of gender equality, inclusion, diversity and environmental protection into all aspects of mine action. The request further indicates that during the extension period, these cross-cutting issues will be further integrated into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mine action activities, in accordance with the IMAS, NMAS, and the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as relevant international obligations in the fields of human rights and sustainable development.

22. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina will integrate environmental and climate considerations in implementation activities, and that during the extension period, environment will be integrated into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mine action activities, in accordance with the IMAS.

23. The Committee noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina providing updates on its efforts to integrate gender and climate and environmental considerations in the implementation of Article 5 and welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina continuing to report on these efforts.

## Budget and requirements for assistance

24. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina will require a total of 260 million BAM to complete the planned activities during the extension period. It anticipates a national contribution of 60%, with the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Civil Protection authorities and BHMAC expected to continue receiving an estimated annual amount of 20,60 million BAM from the Budget of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the budgets of FBiH and the Government of Republika Srpska. The request further indicates that the

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Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue co-financing a multi-year project that encourages local communities to allocate their own financial resources to demining activities. A request has been submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Treasury to increase the project's total value to 3 million BAM annually for 2028–2030.

25. The request indicates that approximately 40% of the funding required for activities during the extension period is expected from Bosnia and Herzegovina's traditional donor countries. Approximately 55% of donor funding for technical survey and mine-clearance activities is expected to be channelled through ITF Enhancing Human Security, the Delegation of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other international institutions and organisations. Donor coordination takes place through the Donor Board for Mine Action, established under the Law on Demining in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support the Demining Commission and BHMAC. The request indicates that the Board is comprised of representatives of UNDP, the Office of the High Representative and other international donors and is expected to meet twice annually. The Committee noted the importance of the Donor Board in strengthening national-level coordination by ensuring regular dialogue with national and international stakeholders on implementation progress, challenges and assistance requirements.

## Residual contamination

26. The request indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina plans to address residual mine and ERW contamination by gradually shifting from proactive, internationally funded survey and clearance operations to a nationally sustained system focused on reactive response and long-term risk management. The request indicates that as the country approaches fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations, residual contamination management will require stronger strategic planning, including the transfer of responsibility to existing state structures and financing through the national budget. The request also indicates that owing to its established technical capacities, Bosnia and Herzegovina is well positioned to manage residual hazards effectively with its own resources and that this will rely on the active participation of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation Civil Protection Administration, and the Republic Administration of Civil Protection of Republika Srpska, whose coordinated roles will be central to maintaining an efficient and sustainable national response to residual contamination. The Committee noted the importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina providing updates on a residual contamination strategy to ensure the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, discovered following completion.

## Interim commitment

27. In recalling that the request is dependent on an increase in State budget allocations, the engagement of the Armed Forces to undertake non-technical survey of mined areas, and sustained national and international resourcing, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Bosnia and Herzegovina providing by 30 April 2029, an updated detailed, costed and multi-year work plan for the remaining extension period. The Committee noted that this work plan should contain information on progress made, the result of re-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 extension period and by which organisation, matched to a detailed budget. The Committee further indicated the importance of the updated work plan containing detailed, costed, and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities.

28. The request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request, including risks and assumptions concerning implementation as well as annexes relating to demining plans, non-technical survey, and EORE plan aligned to land release operations during the extension period.

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## Annual reporting commitment

29. The Committee noted that the plan is ambitious, and that success is dependent upon sustainable State and international funding, engagement of national capacities, and building strong partnerships with international stakeholders. In this regard, the Committee noted that the States Parties would benefit from Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting annually, by 30 April, to the States Parties on the following:

(a) progress made relative to the commitments contained in Bosnia and Herzegovina's work plan 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 Bosnia and Herzegovina'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, by disaggregating by 'suspect hazardous areas,' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size including by disaggregating between the type of contamination to ensure increased clarity on the remaining challenges;

(d) updated information on the timeline and process for the recruitment, training, deployment and prioritisation of non-technical survey activities to be carried out by the Armed Forces;

(e) implementation of mine risk education and reduction efforts in affected communities, including information on how priorities were established, the methodologies used, the challenges faced and the results achieved, disaggregated by gender, age, disability and the diverse needs and experiences of affected communities;

(f) efforts to ensure that NMAS are continuously reviewed to ensure their alignment with the latest IMAS;

(g) resource mobilization efforts and external financing received, as well as results of efforts to increase available funding from the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to support implementation efforts;

(h) efforts to strengthen national level coordination through the board of donors, ensuring regular dialogue with national and international stakeholders, including donors, on implementation progress, challenges and assistance requirements;

(i) efforts to ensure consideration for the different 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; and

(j) updates on a residual contamination strategy to ensure the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, discovered following completion.

30. The Committee noted the importance, in addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding its implementation of Article 5 during the period covered by the request and other commitments made in the request at intersessional meetings, Meeting of the States Parties and Review Conferences as well as through Article 7 reports using the Guide for Reporting.

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