

# Fourth 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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Item 11 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of submissions of States Parties as provided for in Article 5**

## **Analysis of the request submitted by Ethiopia 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 (Austria, Canada, Colombia and the Netherlands)\***

1. Ethiopia acceded to the Convention on 17 December 2004. The Convention entered into force for Ethiopia on 1 June 2005. In its initial transparency report submitted on 5 July 2008, Ethiopia reported areas under its jurisdiction or control containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Ethiopia was obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 June 2015. Ethiopia, believing that it would be unable to do so by that date, submitted, on 15 June 2015 to the President of the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties (14MSP), a request for an extension of its deadline, until 1 June 2020. The 14MSP agreed unanimously to grant the request.

2. In granting the request, the Meeting noted that while it may be unfortunate that after almost eleven years after entry into force a State Party is unable to specify how much work remains to be carried out, it is positive that Ethiopia intends to renew efforts to garner an understanding of the true remaining extent of the challenge and develop plans accordingly.

3. On 31 March 2019, Ethiopia submitted to the Committee on Article 5 implementation ("The Committee") a request for extension of its 1 June 2020 deadline. On 14 June 2019, the Committee wrote to Ethiopia to request additional clarification and information provided by Ethiopia in its request for extension. On 20 August 2019, Ethiopia submitted to the Committee additional information in response to the Committee's questions. The Committee noted with satisfaction that Ethiopia has submitted its request in a timely manner and had engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee. Ethiopia's request is for 5 years 6 months, until 1 December 2025.

4. The request indicates that during its initial extension period, Ethiopia released 53 suspected hazardous areas measuring 136,819,000 square metres in the Somali and Oromia regions, including 125,376,000 square metres cancelled, 9,945,000 square metres reduced, and 1,498,000 square metres cleared. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting additional information on land release activities conducted in the Oromia region. Ethiopia responded that operations in the Oromia region relate to the industrial mining industry. The Committee noted the importance of Ethiopia continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent

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\* The present document was submitted after the deadline to include the latest available data.



with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), disaggregating by area cancelled through non-technical survey (NTS), reduced through technical survey (TS) and cleared through clearance.

5. The request indicates the following, which in Ethiopia's view, acted as impeding circumstances during Ethiopia's initial extension period: (a) lack of financial resources from the State and international donors, (b) insecurity, (c) scattered minefields resulting in the need to consistently shift area of operations, which takes time and resources, (d) absence of basic social services and other infrastructure, (e) seasonal changes, and (f) lack of information on the number and location of areas contaminated by anti-personnel mines.

6. The request indicates that anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to have humanitarian, and socio-economic impacts in Ethiopia disallowing local communities' access to arable land, grazing fields, and water sources. Landmine and ERWs also restrict the free movement of people, animals, the transport of goods that hinder economic productivity and delivery of social services.

7. The request indicates a remaining challenge of 261 hazardous areas measuring 1,056,349,551 square metres, including 35 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 6,304,538 square metres and 226 suspect hazardous areas measuring 1,050,045,013 square metres in six regions of the country, Afar, Benshangul Gumz, Gambela, Oromia, Somali, and Tigray. The request further indicated that suspected hazardous areas remained to be addressed along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border.

8. As noted, Ethiopia's request is for 5 years and 6 months, 1 June 2020 - 1 December 2025. The request provides an overview of the rationale of the time requested, including, (a) size of confirmed and suspected areas, (b) available financial resources, and (c) survey and clearance capacities.

9. The request indicates that at the end of 2018 Ethiopia's Ministry of Defence - Head Office took over the responsibility of the mine action programme from the Defence Engineering Department. The request indicates that this move was undertaken for the following reasons; giving a greater role to the Defence Civil Minister to direct mine action activities, provide direction in accessing the remaining mined areas, and improved communication with international donors. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on the new mine action program structure in place and assistance in identifying a focal point to facilitate communication between the Mine Action Office and the international community. Ethiopia indicated that interested partners contact the Ministry of National Defence - Foreign Relations Directorate.

10. The request contains a detailed work plan and budget for the extension period. The work plan outlines six goals: (1) to clear danger from all confirmed and suspect hazardous areas, (2) to destroy mines found in confirmed and suspect areas, (3) to maintain the marking of hazard areas until completion of clearance, (4) to continue mine risk education (MRE) programs for the population living and working in hazard areas, (5) to maintain cooperation with international partners, and (6) to maintain staff capacities.

11. The request indicates several factors that could positively or negatively impact on the request timeframe, including: (a) a steady increase of funding from State and donors, (b) a need for the replacement of old demining equipment, (c) changes to the average output of manual clearance teams, and (d) plans to increase demining capacity through by one manual clearance company.

12. The work plan indicates that during the period of extension, Ethiopia will address 173,412,790.26 square metres in 2019, 175,807,352 square metres in 2020, 175,807,352 square metres in 2021, 175,807,352.74 square metres in 2022, 175,807,352 square metres in 2023, 175,807,352 square metres in 2024, and 3,900,000 square metres in 2025. The request indicates that this does not include areas to be addressed on the Ethiopian-Eritrean border. The work plan further indicates that Ethiopia projects only 2% of suspected hazardous areas will require clearance, following non-technical and technical survey. The Committee noted the significant increases of area to be released during the second extension period relative to the area released during Ethiopia's initial request.

13. The Committee noted that the commitment made by Ethiopia to undertake NTS and TS activities may result in implementation that proceeds much faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested and in a more cost-effective manner. The Committee added that doing so could benefit Ethiopia in ensuring that the grave humanitarian, social and economic impacts outlined by Ethiopia in its request are addressed as quickly as possible.

14. The work plan further indicates that Ethiopia is committed to keep the States Parties informed on progress in addressing remaining contamination along the Ethiopia - Eritrea border. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on plans to address anti-personnel mine contamination located in border areas, including what activities or negotiations are being undertaken between Ethiopia and Eritrea to facilitate these activities, what state entity is charged with negotiations on demarcation and if humanitarian demining has been considered as a possible confidence and security building measure between the two States. Ethiopia indicated that negotiations between officials from the two States have started and that once negotiations are finalised all demining activities in border areas will be tasked to the Mine Action Office. The Committee noted positively Ethiopia's commitment in keeping the States Parties informed by reporting on information on and plans to deal with mined areas along Ethiopia's border with Eritrea. The Committee further noted that all could benefit if additional clarity was provided on the location and status of areas suspected to contain mines along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border and Ethiopia's plans to proceed in addressing all such areas under its jurisdiction or control. The Committee also noted that both Ethiopia and all States Parties could benefit if Ethiopia provided updates on such matters at intersessional meeting and at Meetings of the States Parties.

15. The request indicates that Ethiopia has the following capacity to address its remaining challenge; 4 demining companies, 2 technical survey / rapid response teams, 2 explosive ordnance disposal teams (EOD), and 6 Bozena ground preparation machines. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on the current and required survey capacity of Ethiopia to achieve the targets stated goals in the request. Ethiopia responded by indicating that each demining company includes 90 personnel, and each EOD team comprises 45 personnel. Ethiopia further indicated non-technical and technical methods will be employed for survey, with EOD personnel deployed to support clearance, and rapid response teams.

16. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on plans to test, pilot, or introduce new methodologies, in line with the latest land release standards, including the use of mechanical assets and animal detection systems to address its remaining challenge. Ethiopia responded by indicating that technical and non-technical methods will be used for survey, and manual demining used for clearance as the areas contaminated by anti-personnel mines are located in remote mountainous areas in which machinery and mine detection dogs are not suitable. The Committee highlighted the importance of Ethiopia continuing efforts to employ the full range of methods to permit the safe return of land to the population and encouraged Ethiopia to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques which could lead to Ethiopia fulfilling its obligations in a shorter time frame.

17. The work plan indicates that risk education activities are to be provided in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, local administrations, public companies and international organisations to all landmine/ERW affected communities at risk, taking into account both age and gender considerations. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on the methodologies employed to effectively exclude civilians from the remaining mined areas on and its efforts to ensure that MRE activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive. Ethiopia indicated that mine risk education activities aim to reduce the impact of mines on women, girls, boys and men living in or near mined areas, with activities conducted by elders through social gatherings. Ethiopia also indicated that MRE officers are deployed with demining companies, technical survey and roving teams in order to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas, including their livestock. The Committee noted the commitment of Ethiopia continuing to develop age, gender and culturally appropriate mine risk education strategies and welcomes Ethiopia providing updates on its commitments to the States Parties.

18. The request indicates that Ethiopia will require a total of US \$40,958,157.39 to maintain its current capacity related to the implementation of Article 5 during the period of the extension request. The request further indicates that Ethiopia will allocate US

\$8,191,631.48 from its State budget, with US \$32,766,525.91 projected in donations. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on the timeline for the allocation of State funds, and Ethiopia's efforts to mobilise resources from the international community. Ethiopia responded by indicating that it had an initial allocation of 1,490,000 Birr to address mined areas in Somali region, with these funds used to cover the renting of off-road vehicles during the extension period. The Committee noted that Ethiopia's national contributions to implementing Article 5 will assist in fulfilling its obligations in the manner outlined in the request and highlighted the importance of Ethiopia continuing to keep the Committee and the States Parties informed of any funding challenges it faces for the implementation of Article 5.

19. The request indicates that Ethiopia is interested to work with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support mine action activities. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on its efforts to seek collaboration from international partners. Ethiopia responded by indicating that it plans to contact partners as part of ongoing survey and clearance activities. The Committee welcomed the commitment of Ethiopia to work with partners to ensure implementation of Ethiopia's Article 5 obligations as soon as possible. The Committee noted that involving non-governmental organisations and international operators may increase Ethiopia's efficiency in mine clearance operations.

20. The Committee wrote to Ethiopia requesting further information on how Ethiopia intends to structure its organisational capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion. Ethiopia responded by indicating that the Mine Action office has the capacity to respond to residual contamination.

21. The Committee noted that the request includes other relevant information that may be of use to the States Parties in assessing and considering the request, including further detail on the extent and nature of progress made, socio-economic benefits of mine clearance, further information on transition of mine action structures, with additional detail on current demining capacity, and tables relating to land addressed during first extension period.

22. In recalling that the implementation of Ethiopia's national demining plan may be affected by outcomes of agreements on survey and clearance on its border with Eritrea, the impact of results from survey, and increased cooperation and partnership from international organisations and mine clearance operators, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Ethiopia submitting to the Committee an updated detailed work plan by 30 April 2021, and 30 April 2023, for the remaining period covered by the extension request. The Committee noted that these work plans should contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with IMAS, annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget.

23. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the information provided in the request and subsequently in responses to the Committee's questions is comprehensive, complete and clear. The Committee further noted that the plan presented by Ethiopia is workable, lends itself well to be monitored, and states clearly which factors could affect progress in implementation. The Committee also noted that the plan is ambitious and that its success is based on significant co-contributions from the international community and increased cooperation and partnership from international mine action organisations. In this regard, the Committee noted that the Convention would benefit from Ethiopia reporting annually by 30 April to the States Parties on the following:

(a) Progress made relative to the commitments contained in Ethiopia's annual survey and clearance plan during the extension period disaggregated by area cancelled, reduced and cleared and their impact on annual targets as given in Ethiopia's work plan;

(b) Updated information on the full range of practical methods used to release land, including the use of mechanical assets and animal detection systems. Together with relevant information on the training of national mine personnel, operators in new methodologies and quality control;

(c) Progress on the agreement of Ethiopia and Eritrea regarding plans to address anti-personnel contamination in border areas, including national institutions involved in the effort, process of the work, and annual milestones;

(d) Updates regarding resource mobilization efforts and external financing received, and resources made available by the government of Ethiopia to support implementation efforts;

(e) Updates regarding efforts to collaborate with international and non-governmental organisations to support implementation of the plan within the extension request;

(f) Updates regarding the methodologies employed to effectively exclude civilians from the remaining mined areas on and efforts to ensure that MRE activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive.

24. The Committee noted the importance, in addition to Ethiopia reporting to the States Parties as noted above, of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments regarding the 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 its Article 7 reports using the Guide for Reporting.

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