

**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

**Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
Article 5 of the Convention**

Executive summary

Submitted by Ethiopia

1. Ethiopia was one of the first countries to sign the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in December 1997. Ethiopia ratified the Convention on December 2004 and the Convention entered into force for Ethiopia on June 2005.
2. At the time Ethiopia ratified the Convention it was well known that Ethiopia was one of the most heavily land mine contaminated countries. Anti-personnel mines (APM) and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) have been used in Ethiopia since the invasion of Italian colonialism in 1935-41, the war in the eastern region of Ethiopian Somali in the border of Somalia in 1977-1978, the long internal conflict of 1974-1991, the recent Ethiopian and Eritrean war in the northern region of the country, and in the border of Tigray and Afar Administrative Regions 1998-2000.
3. Following the ceasefire and December peace agreement signed with Eritrea in June 2000, the Ethiopian government invited the United Nations (UN) to assist in developing a national mine action programme. In February 2001, the Council of Minister's decree N°70/2001 established the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EX-EMAO) under the Prime Minister's office responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education. Other tasks, such as victim assistance fell under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and stockpile destruction under the Ministry of Defence, respectively.
4. The first effort to establish a national picture of contamination in Ethiopia was the 2001-2004 Ethiopian Landmine Impact Survey (ELIS). The survey gave Ethiopia a high degree of confidence that it had found virtually all impacted communities and established a nationwide baseline. While the ELIS provided the first overall picture of the landmine problem in the country it became clear that the level of contamination was overstated.
5. Since 2002, the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EX-EMAO) with the support of a number of donors and Norwegian people's Aid (NPA) carried out efforts to confirm the results of the LIS and carry out mine clearance throughout the country. These efforts have been carried out through the employment of National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) and Standard Operating Procedures which, with the support of NPA, have been updated in accordance with amendments to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). Operations have also been carried out employing overall quality management including quality



assurance and quality control efforts to ensure that operations are in accordance with NMAS and IMAS.

6. During the period of 2002 – 2012, the Ethiopian Mine Action Office cleared 59.6 square kilometres with an estimated 1,190,317,900 square metres of suspected hazard areas technically verified and released for community use.

7. In 2012, the Ex-EMAO was dissolved by decree and responsibilities for completing Ethiopia's mine clearance obligations transferred to the Ministry of National Defence. As reported in the first extension the Ethiopian Government dissolved the EX-EMAO by decree and the remaining task was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Defence Engineering Department. Recently the responsibility was transferred to the Ministry of National Defence - Head Office for the following reasons:

- Manage the Mine action activity and resources directly by the Defence Civil Minister;
- Remaining confirmed areas are accessible by the Ministry of National Defence – the Head Office can direct implementation;
- With demining resources and donations coming shorter and shorter, it is important that the landmine clearance is carried out by Ministry of National Defence, as Defence minister is in a better position to communicate with donors and for budgeting directly from the head office.

8. On 15 June 2015, Ethiopia submitted a request to extend its mine clearance deadline. The request was granted at the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties and a new deadline set for 1 June 2020.

9. On 7 December 2017, Ethiopia acted upon the decisions of the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties by submitting an updated work plan for the implementation of Article 5 of the Convention.

10. During the period of the first request Ethiopia addressed a total of 53 SHAs measuring 136,819,000 including 125,376,000 square metres cancelled, 9,945,000 square metres reduced, and 1,498,000 square metres cleared.

11. Mine clearance in Ethiopia has benefited over 2 million people. Benefits of mine clearance activities over the years have included the resettlement of people displaced by the conflict, infrastructure reconstruction and repair, release of land security of previously conflict affected regions, amongst others.

12. The presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war (LM/ERW) have hampered access to land in many areas, causing food insecurity and representing an obstacle to the peace consolidation process in border areas. One half of impacted communities reported blocked access to pasture land, and one third reported blockage to roads, trails and land for rain-fed crops. Blocked roads and trails in mountainous areas are a serious problem, as it is difficult to find alternate routes. The third blockage category in importance is rain fed cropland, a main feature of Ethiopian agriculture, nomadic pastoralists also suffer from blocked access to water.

13. Mine action has faced some difficulties in the course of accomplishing its obligations. Although it has completed most of its operations, the final effort has been made more difficult due to the following circumstances:

- Lack of state and international donor finance reducing the resource required for clearance;
- Insecurity: Suspected hazardous areas located in border and remote areas where insecurity makes access difficult for civilian demining teams;
- Accessibility: The absence of basic social services for the supply of basic needs (including shelter, water, medical, infrastructure) makes it difficult for teams to reach hazardous areas and carry out operations;

- Limited operations: Redeployment of demining teams in scattered minefield areas, reduce efficiency of operations and resources;
- Climatic factors: Mine Action is constrained for three months of the year because of heavy rain.

14. The Ministry of Defence - Mine Action has been moving forward to implement its plan to address the remaining confirmed and suspected hazardous area. In order to implement the plan, Ethiopia does face a number of other challenges including the following:

- The buffer zone between Ethiopia-Eritrea is not demarcated; marking is difficult to determine which areas are under the responsibility of Ethiopia and Eritrea;
- Rapid response Teams (RRT) and explosive ordnance disposal teams (EODs) are equipped with old demining equipment. The Ministry of National Defence aims to replace old equipment to fulfil Ethiopia's obligation under the Convention. However, the Ministry's budget is limited;
- To complete the work of the demining training centre. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the training centre is not completed due to a lack of funding;
- To certify RRT and EOD teams through advanced training: Most clearance activities are conducted on minefields. However, deminers are less experienced on planning and implementing assets to address ERW. While the Centre has taken some steps on training units regarding this task, it needs international support and technical advisors.

15. Ethiopia has a total of 261 mined areas measuring 1,056,340,000 square metres to be addressed, including;

- 35 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 6,304,538 square metres
- 226 suspected hazardous areas measuring 1,050,045,013 square metres.

16. The total amount of area remaining to be released does not include suspect hazardous areas located along Ethiopian-Eritrean confrontation border. Since the departure of United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2008 no one has entered the buffer zone to survey the area due to a lack of border demarcation. However, the expectation of Ethiopia is that discussions through the soon-to-be-established joint border commission will allow survey and clearance operations to take place.

17. Ethiopia is requesting second extension totalling five years from 1 June 2020 until December 2025, to fulfil its Article 5 obligations.

18. This time frame is necessary for Ethiopia to:

- Address the remaining contamination, it is expected that 2% of suspected hazardous areas will require clearance following non-technical and technical survey;
- Address an annual target of 4,790,427 square metres through clearance and 171,507,352 square metres through non-technical and technical survey;
- Once demarcation is completed, survey the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea;
- Acquire the support of donors and international advisors;
- Re-equip demining companies, Rapid Response Teams and EOD teams;
- Implement MRE and mark of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs);
- Provide training and capacity building to demining teams, rapid response teams and EOD teams.
- Complete the work of the Demining Training Centre.

19. Based on the past experience it is estimated that the fulfilment of the Article 5 obligation in Ethiopia will cost an estimated US \$40,958,157.39.

This budget is calculated from the remaining challenge and based on the following rationale:

- 6,304,538 square metres of known mined area;
- 1,050,045,013 square metres of suspect hazardous area;
- Estimated 2% of the remaining SHA to be subject to clearance (21,000,900 square metres);
- Ethiopia estimates total clearance of 27,305,438 square metres;
- Ethiopia estimates an average cost of clearance at US \$1.50 per square metre;
- 27,305,438.26 per square metre at US \$1.50 is equal to US \$40,958,157 required for clearance.
