

Statement by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on the Analysis of the

Request for extension submitted by Ethiopia

Mr. President (Chair),

We, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, noted with satisfaction that Ethiopia had submitted its request in a timely manner and has engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the Committee in the extension request process.

- On 31 March 2019, Ethiopia submitted to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation a request for extension of its 1 June 2020 deadline.
- On 9 April 2019, the Committee wrote to expert organisations in order to draw on expert mine clearance and legal advice on the request submitted by Ethiopia.
- The Committee would like to thank the ICBL and the Mine Action Review for providing their expert input on Ethiopia's request.
- 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.
- Ethiopia's request is for 5 years, 6 months until 1 December 2025.

In analysing Ethiopia's submission, I would like to share some key points on behalf of the Committee.

Progress Made

The Committee welcomed the progress reported by Ethiopia in the request. The Committee noted the importance of Ethiopia continuing to report on its progress in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

The request indicates that at the end of 2018 the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian Ministry of Defence - Head Office took over the responsibility of the mine action programme from the Defence Engineering Department. The Committee noted the importance of Ethiopia providing further information on the new mine action program structure.

The request also highlighted the circumstances which impeded Ethiopia from achieving its deadline.

Ethiopia's remaining challenge

The request further contains information concerning Ethiopia's remaining challenge including a rationale for the time requested.

Ethiopia's work plan

Concerning Ethiopia's work plan, it indicates annual milestones towards completion. In this regard, 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.

The Committee noted that the commitment made by Ethiopia to undertake survey activities may result in implementation that proceeds much faster than by the amount of time requested, and in a more cost-effective manner. The Committee added that proceeding faster in the implementation 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.

The Committee further 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.

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 noted that both Ethiopia and all States Parties could benefit if Ethiopia provided updates on such matters at intersessional meetings and at Meetings of the States Parties.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, 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 organizations 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 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, as part of its Article 7 obligations, 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 demining personnel, operators in new methodologies and quality control;
- c. Progress on the agreement of Ethiopia and Eritrea regarding plans to address anti-personnel mine 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 and efforts to ensure that mine risk education (MRE) activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive.

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.