

## GICHD remarks on APMC Article 5 extension request submitted by the Republic of Yemen

Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention  
Oslo, 27 November 2019

The GICHD would like to congratulate the Government of Yemen for developing and submitting their three-year Article 5 extension request. This is quite an achievement given the conflict that has existed in the country since 2015, and the considerable challenges that such a situation has brought to Yemen.

In submitting this request, the Yemen Government has brought to light what they have appropriately termed a ‘startling feature’ in such a document. This is of course a reference to the fact that the government are not currently able to provide an accurate estimation of the AP mine contamination across the country.

As a consequence of renewed conflict, it is worth to note that; despite the lack of a nation-wide victim surveillance system, the records that are being kept indicate an alarming increase in the number of victims between 2016-2018, and that AP mines, including those of an improvised nature, are being used in the current conflict, re-contaminating land that was previously cleared. We should also note that national support to mine action has dropped off. Therefore, there is an immediate requirement for support to rebuild and strengthen the national capacity in Yemen.

It is commendable that the Government of Yemen is prepared to be open about the situation and frank about the repercussions. Rather than requesting the maximum ten-year extension, they have requested three years to focus on establishing as accurate a picture as possible of the problem, whilst continuing to conduct emergency mine action activities. To this end, the Government of Yemen through UNDP has requested support from GICHD in the re-establishment and ongoing development of its Information Management system, which the Centre is prepared to provide.

Yemen has also requested support with national standards, particularly those related to survey, to enable a survey planned for April 2020. GICHD will work closely with YEMAC and UNDP towards providing this support.

It is also welcome that Yemen has highlighted stories of women and girls affected by landmines and the GICHD encourages Yemen to apply a gender lens to all mine action pillars over the extension period as capacity is developed.

The GICHD views that a three year extension as the right approach under the circumstances, not least because it effectively includes a commitment to reporting back to the convention in detail no later than 2023, when a further request will have to be submitted, that will need to be far more evidence based.

The GICHD would like to reaffirm its commitment to supporting Yemen in this challenging path to eventual completion. Recognizing that Yemen requires support on many fronts, GICHD will be looking at ways to conduct an integrated assessment to look at strategic engagement with UNDP and YEMAC.