

Right of Reply in response to Argentina's Article 5 Extension Request:

The United Kingdom welcomes the efforts of all States Parties to meet their obligations under the Convention, especially on Article 5 mine clearance.

In that respect, we acknowledge the Article 5 extension request just presented by Argentina. However, the United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands and surrounding maritime areas, nor about the principle and the right of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination as enshrined in the UN Charter and in article one of the two UN Covenants on human rights, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

This means there can be no dialogue on sovereignty unless the Falkland Islanders so wish. The 2013 referendum made clear that the people of the Islands do not want dialogue on sovereignty. Argentina should respect those wishes.

The Convention's 17th Meeting of States Parties, in 2018, agreed a new deadline of 1 March 2024 under Article 5.6 for the UK to complete

landmine clearance of the contaminated territory under its jurisdiction or control. The UK fully intends to clear the Falkland Islands unilaterally within this deadline and in accordance with its obligations.

Thank you, Mr President