

ICBL Comments on Extension Request by DRC

18MSP, 16-20 November 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

We thank the Democratic Republic of Congo for submitting this solid and clear extension request. Given the small amount of remaining contamination, we hope that it will be the last. The request outlines the objectives to clear 0.12km² of known contamination in 9 provinces and to complete survey and clearance in Aru and Dungu territories.

Among positive points of the request we note the following:

- The request clearly sets out the objectives and an overview of the work to be carried out during the extended period and includes a projected budget for clearance, risk education, coordination and operations in Aru and Dungu.
- DRC commits to contributing over 14% of national funding to the projected budget to cover the CCLAM's operating expenses, including mine action coordination.
- The request includes a brief risk education plan and gender mainstreaming objectives.
- We also commend DRC's intention to combine survey and clearance activities with the identification of victims and their needs during the extension period and acknowledge the commitment of DCA to clear a significant share of the remaining 33 known mined areas.

Points that will require further attention and clarifications are as follows:

- DRC's planned 2021-2025 national mine action strategic plan and a multi-year work plan should be shared with States Parties in writing no later than the 2021 Intersessional Meetings.
- DRC has stated that there needs to be survey and clearance in Aru and Dungu, but no information is provided on the suspected extent of contamination in these areas or the expected duration of this work. DRC should include in its workplan the capacity and time required to meet these objectives to demonstrate that they will be completed within the requested extension period.
- At least 12 areas are still unassigned to an operator. DRC should provide confirmation as soon as possible on whether AFRILAM can complete the work in the 12 areas (a total of 0.045km² of contaminated area) or if alternative support will be required.
- DRC has provided some information on its resource mobilization strategy and we are pleased it engaged in the individualized approach meeting. However, it has yet to secure the necessary funding for planned clearance and survey activities. DRC should provide an update on how resource mobilization will be conducted in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic and consider increasing contribution from its national budget to demonstrate the national ownership and commitment required by Action #42 of the Oslo Action Plan Action.

Thank you.