

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Belgium, Norway, Sri Lanka and Zambia (Chair))

Intersessional Meetings 22 – 24 June 2021

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY SUDAN

I. Progress in implementation (OAP Action #8, #22)

1. Sudan reported that in 2020 it released 9 hazardous areas measuring 353,799 square metres by clearance resulting in the destruction of 42 anti-personnel mines, 16 anti-tank mines and 21,893 other items of explosive ordnance.
2. The Committee observed that the information provided by Sudan on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2020 updated work plan. The Committee welcomed Sudan providing disaggregated information on progress in accordance with land release methodology employed, using the Guide to Reporting and in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) (Action #8, Action #22).

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge (OAP Action #18, #22)

3. The Committee observed that Sudan provided a high degree of clarity¹ concerning its remaining challenge (Action #18). Sudan reported a remaining challenge of 97 hazardous areas measuring 13,090,935 square metres located in 3 States, including 56 confirmed hazardous areas measuring 2,255,389 square metres and 41 suspected hazardous areas measuring 10,835,546 square metres (Action #22).
4. The Committee welcomed Sudan reporting remaining challenges in a manner consistent with IMAS, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size (Action #22).
5. Action #18 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States that have not yet done so will identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, and establish evidence based, accurate baselines of contamination based on information collected from all relevant sources, no later than by the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021. **The Committee observed that Sudan was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Sudan on these efforts (Action #18).**
6. Action #18 of the Oslo Plan requests States to report on having established their baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men. **The Committee observed that Sudan had not provided updated information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts to establish Sudan's baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men, and welcomes additional information on Sudan's efforts in this regard (Action #18).**

¹ "High degree of clarity" has been used when a State Party has provided a list of all remaining areas (known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines), the estimated size of each area, the status of each area (i.e., "known" or "suspected"), information on the geographic location of each area.

III. National plans for clearance and survey (OAP Actions #1, #2, #3, #6, #19, #20, #26)

7. The Committee recalled that Sudan's updated work plan submitted in 2020 contained a national evidence based and costed plan for clearance and survey for the period of 2020-2023 (Action #2, Action #19). Sudan further reported having a National Mine Action Strategy in place for the period of 2020-2023 (Action #2).
8. Sudan reported that it would address 14,833,365 square metres through non-technical survey and 913,126 square metres through technical survey / clearance for the period 2020-2021, 8,229,561 square metres through non-technical survey and 1,457,643 square metres through technical survey / clearance for the period 2021-2022, and 902,437 square metres through non-technical survey and 31,491 square metres through technical survey / clearance for the period 2022-2023. The Committee observed that Sudan had reported adjusted milestones based on new evidence, including information on the number of areas and the amount of mined area to be addressed annually (Action #20).
7. Sudan reported that mine action is integrated into national development plans, poverty reduction strategy and humanitarian response plans. **The Committee would welcome further detailed information on Sudan's efforts in this regard** (Action #1).
8. The Committee observed Sudan reported in detail on the allocation of annual financial commitments towards implementation, including an annual allocation of US \$2,000,000 from the Government of Sudan. The Committee further noted that Sudan had reported in detail on financial contributions from its implementing partners and donors during the reporting period (Action #1). Sudan reported that advocacy plays a vital role in humanitarian mine action in terms of ensuring common consensus and encouraging cooperation among different stakeholders and conflict factions, in obtaining safe access and suitable environment for the implementation of mine action activities. The Committee noted with satisfaction Sudan's efforts to strengthen partnerships and integrate responses between mine action related activities and humanitarian response plans, peacebuilding, development or human rights plans, where relevant (Action #6).
9. The Committee recalled that Sudan's updated work plan submitted in 2020 included updates on its efforts to ensure the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered, including the development of management policies that have been communicated to all departments and national mine action organizations working in Sudan. Sudan also reported that mine action activities do not cause any forms of marginalization, vulnerability, or exclusion that may be experienced by individuals from the mine/ERW affected communities (Action #3).
10. Sudan reported that its national mine action strategy and work plan make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas following completion (Action #26).

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation (OAP Actions #5, #9, #27)

11. Sudan reported on its efforts to ensure that its National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) are in line with IMAS. Sudan reported that the review of critical safety, control and quality elements of Sudan's NMAS are awaiting endorsement. The Committee welcomes the information from Sudan and would welcome further information on the timeline for approval of the updated NMAS (Action #5).

12. Sudan reported on its efforts to maintain an accurate and up-to-date information management system. In this regard, Sudan reported that it is introducing IMSMA New Generation that will be used to maintain accurate and up-to-date data on the status of implementation. The Committee welcomes the information from Sudan and would welcome further information for the timeline of implementation (Action #9).
13. Action #27 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States to take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance, including by promoting the research, application and sharing of innovative technological means to this effect. **The Committee observed that Sudan had not provided information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance operations, including by promoting the research, application and sharing of innovative technological means (Action #27).**

V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them

14. In considering Sudan's 2018 extension request, the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties requested Sudan to submit updated information on several matters. The Committee welcomes the information provided by Sudan on;
- Progress in land release relative to the commitments made in Sudan's annual work plan, disaggregating outputs in a manner consistent with the IMAS, including consistent disaggregation between explosive hazards destroyed;
 - Updates regarding mine survey assessments, related survey and deployment of clearance capacities in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, including the identification of new mined areas, and their impact on annual targets as given in Sudan's work plan;
 - Regular updates regarding changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively affect implementation; Updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts within the new Strategic plan, including resources made available by the Government of Sudan and external financing received to support implementation efforts and the effects of the funding level on the implementation of the work plan; and
 - Updates regarding the structure of Sudan's mine action program, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion.
15. The Committee would welcome updated information from Sudan on the following decisions of the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties:
- Updates regarding the review of Sudan's national mine action Strategy and National technical Standard and Guidelines, including a clear timeline for the development of these processes and updates on 'data clean-up' efforts;

VI. Mine risk education and reduction (OAP Actions #28-32)

16. Sudan reported on the actions it has taken to effectively exclude the population from mined areas, including marking of hazardous areas and implementation of mine risk education and reduction programmes (MRE/R) including the methodologies used, challenges faced and results achieved. The Committee welcomes the information shared by Sudan (Action #32).

17. Sudan reported that MRE/R are integrated into humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts, as well as with ongoing survey, clearance and victim assistance activities (Action #28).

18. Action #29 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States to Provide context-specific mine risk education and reduction programmes to all affected populations and groups at risk. Ensure that such programmes are developed on the basis of a needs assessment, that they are tailored to the threat encountered by the population, and that they are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account. The Committee observed that while Sudan reported that context-specific MRE/R are provided to affected populations and groups at risk. **The Committee observed that Sudan had not provided information in its Article 7 Report on the developed of such programmes on the basis of a needs assessment and on its efforts to develop MRE/R tailored to the threat encountered and sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account, and would welcome further information in this regard. (Action #29).**

19. Action #30 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States to Prioritise people most at risk by linking mine risk education and reduction programmes and messages directly to an analysis of available casualty and contamination data, an understanding of the affected population's behaviour, risk pattern and coping mechanisms, and, wherever possible, anticipated population movements. The Committee observed that while Sudan reported that MRE/R programmes target high risk groups and high-risk areas through well-defined impact criteria. **The Committee observed that Sudan had not provided information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts to establish an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for MRE/R programmes and encourages Sudan to provide further information in this regard (Action #30).**

20. Sudan reported on the efforts of different partners that support MRE activities in Sudan including national organisations (Action #31).

VII. Challenges in implementation (OAP Action #8)

21. The Committee observed that Sudan provided quality information on challenges in implementation, including changes in the security situation and how these changes positively or negatively affect implementation.