
Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of request submitted under Article 5

Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention

Executive summary

Submitted by Afghanistan

1. Afghanistan acceded to the Convention in 2002 and the Convention entered into force for Afghanistan on 1 March 2003. In its initial transparency report submitted on 1 September 2003, Afghanistan reported areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines were known or suspected to be emplaced. In this regard, and in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, Afghanistan undertook to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in these areas as soon as possible but not later than 1 March 2013.

2. The contamination of areas by anti-personnel mines in Afghanistan is the result of the last five decades of war and conflict in Afghanistan. Even before entry into force of the Convention, Afghanistan has been working to address this legacy of conflict in collaboration with several stakeholders.

3. Nevertheless, given the extent of the challenge faced by Afghanistan, on 29 March 2012, Afghanistan submitted a request to extend its initial deadline. At this time, the remaining challenge was reported as 3,847 anti-personnel minefields covering 289.4 square kilometres, 1,266 anti-tank minefields covering 264.95 square kilometres and 155 contaminated areas contaminated by other explosive remnants of war (ERW) covering 41.91 square kilometres. The request further highlighted the need to carry out further survey to gain clarity on contamination. The request was granted by the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties and a new deadline set for 1 March 2023.

4. In Afghanistan's last Article 7 report submitted in 2021, as of 31 December 2020, there were 2,073 areas in Afghanistan known to contain anti-personnel mines totaling 148,455,471 square metres based on direct evidence, and 189 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines totaling 38,852,031 square metres based on indirect evidence. Furthermore, additional survey is required to acquire a full picture of the remaining challenge.

5. It is important to highlight that this contamination has a serious humanitarian, social and economic impact on the population of Afghanistan. While Afghanistan has the necessary experience and a number of stakeholders to address the challenge, it will require continued support from the international community for the successful execution of survey and clearance operation in the remaining affected areas.



6. Unfortunately, due to the complexity on the ground and the current crisis in Afghanistan, Afghanistan is not able to submit an extension request containing information on the remaining challenge and a detailed work plan for addressing the remaining challenge.

7. In this regard, Afghanistan is submitting a request for extension of its Article 5 obligations for a period of two years from March 2023 to March 2025 and is committed to working with stakeholders to submit a detailed request for extension by 31 March 2024.

8. The main purpose of this request for extension is to provide additional time for the situation in Afghanistan to further develop including allowing for more time to understand how the demining sector will develop in Afghanistan in terms of institutional arrangements and continued support from donors.
