
**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**

26 September 2022

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Twentieth Meeting**Geneva, 21-25 November 2022**

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5**Observations on the request submitted by the Islamic
Republic of Afghanistan for an extension of the deadline for
completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in
accordance with Article 5 of the Convention****Submitted by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation
(Belgium, France, Iraq and Sri Lanka)**

1. Afghanistan acceded to the Convention on 11 September 2002. 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 containing, or suspected to contain, anti-personnel mines. Afghanistan is obliged to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control by 1 March 2013. Afghanistan, believing that it will be unable to do so by that date, submitted on 29 March 2012 to the President of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties (11MSP), a request for an extension of its deadline. On 15 June 2012, the President of the 11MSP wrote to Afghanistan to request additional information. Afghanistan provided a response on 27 June 2012 and subsequently, on 31 August 2012, submitted to the President a revised request for an extension. Afghanistan's request was for ten years (until 1 March 2023). The Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties (12MSP) agreed unanimously to grant the request.

2. In granting the request the 12MSP noted that even with a consistent and sizeable effort having been undertaken by Afghanistan going back even before entry into force of the Convention, Afghanistan faced a significant remaining contamination challenge in order to fulfil its obligations under Article 5. The Meeting further noted that, while the plan presented by Afghanistan was workable and ambitious, its success was contingent upon the findings of survey efforts, stable funding and the challenges posed by the security situation.

3. On 4 July 2022, the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan in Geneva submitted to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation (the Committee) a request for extension of its 1 March 2023 deadline. Afghanistan's request is for two years, until 1 March 2025.

4. The request indicates that in Afghanistan's last Article 7 report submitted in 2021, as of 31 December 2020, there were 2,073 confirmed hazardous areas in Afghanistan totalling 148,455,471 square metres based on direct evidence, and 189 suspected hazardous areas totalling 38,852,031 square metres based on indirect evidence. The request further indicates that additional survey is required to acquire a full picture of the remaining challenge.

5. The request indicate that contamination in Afghanistan has a serious humanitarian, social and economic impact on the population. The request further indicates that 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. The request indicates that, 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. The request also indicates that 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. The request further indicates that the main purpose of the 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.

Observations

7. The Committee noted the extraordinary circumstances faced by Afghanistan in presenting a detailed extension request containing a detailed work plan for implementation during the requested extension period. The Committee welcomes the request submitted by the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan in Geneva to ensure continued compliance by Afghanistan with the provisions of the Convention.

8. The Committee noted the socioeconomic impact of anti-personnel mines in Afghanistan the importance of continued support by all stakeholders including the de facto authorities and the international community to the achievement of the humanitarian aims of the Convention.

9. The Committee recognizes the importance of the States Parties agreeing to granting Afghanistan's extension request to allow time for the situation in Afghanistan to develop and, subsequently, once conditions are favourable, for Afghanistan to submit by 31 March 2024 a request for extension containing a detailed work plan for implementation of its obligations under Article 5.

10. The Committee noted the importance of Afghanistan developing its request through an inclusive process, taking into consideration the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities, and including the following information, amongst other:

(a) Detailed, costed and multi-year work plan for the extension period, containing information on progress made, an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with the International Standards for Mine Action (IMAS), annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget based on new funding levels;

(b) Detailed, costed and multi-year plans for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities that are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account;

(c) Plans for the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion;

(d) The humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of the extension;

(e) Resources made available to support implementation efforts, including efforts to facilitate operations of international demining organisations and indigenous capacities, and the results of these efforts.