

**COURTESY TRANSLATION
ARGENTINA'S EXTENSION REQUEST**

Mr. President,

I am pleased to address you to refer to the presentation of an extension request by the Argentine Republic in relation to the stipulated term to comply with the destruction of antipersonnel mines in mined areas, within the framework of Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (Ottawa Convention).

In this regard, and requesting that you forward this note to the Director of the Implementation Support Unit of the Ottawa Convention, I inform you that the Government of the Argentine Republic has decided to submit the request for an extension for the period beginning on March 1, 2023 -date on which the maximum term for the Argentine Republic is fulfilled by virtue of Article 5 of the Convention- and ending on March 1, 2026, with the firm intention of completing the humanitarian demining of anti-personnel mines emplaced in the Malvinas Islands , the only area of the Argentine national territory affected by this type of weapons and to which the Argentine Republic, due to the illegal British occupation, is effectively prevented from accessing.

The special and particular colonial situation in which the Malvinas Islands find themselves was reflected in the Interpretative Declaration that the Argentine Republic formulated at the time of ratifying the Ottawa Convention, on September 14, 1999, which until now has not changed and which constitutes the main basis for the extension granted to my country for compliance with the provisions of Article 5 of the Convention. I transcribe said Interpretative Declaration below:

"The Argentine Republic declares that in its territory, in the Malvinas, there are anti-personnel mines. This situation was brought to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations when providing information within the framework of General Assembly resolutions 48/7; 49/215; 50/82; and 51/149 concerning "Assistance in mine clearance". Since this part of the Argentine territory is under illegal occupation by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Argentine Republic is effectively prevented from having access to the anti-personnel mines placed in the Malvinas in order to fulfil the obligations undertaken in the present Convention. The United Nations General Assembly has recognized the existence of a dispute concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich and has urged the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to maintain negotiations in order to find as soon as possible a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute, with the good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is to report to the General Assembly on the progress made (resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25). The Special Committee on decolonization has taken the same position, and has adopted a resolution every year stating that the way to put an end to this colonial situation is the lasting settlement, on a peaceful and negotiated basis, of the sovereignty dispute, and requesting both Governments to resume negotiations to that end. The most recent of these resolutions was adopted on 1 July 1999. The Argentine Republic reaffirms its rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich and the surrounding maritime areas which form an integral part of its national territory."

As expressed in the Interpretative Declaration, the General Assembly of the United Nations has recognized the existence of a sovereignty dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas through resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25 on the "Question of the Malvinas Islands".

For its part, the Special Committee on Decolonization annually adopts a resolution on the same issue in terms similar to those of the aforementioned resolutions, the last one having been approved by consensus on June 24, 2021.

Despite these repeated pronouncements by the United Nations Organization and other international and regional fora and organizations to resume sovereignty negotiations, the United Kingdom persists in its refusal to comply with these calls by the international community.

The Argentine Republic reaffirms that the Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas form an integral part of the Argentine national territory, and that, being illegitimately occupied by the United Kingdom since 1833, they are the subject of a sovereignty dispute recognized by the United Nations, which qualifies the Question of the Malvinas Islands as a special and particular case of decolonization. For this reason, the Argentine Republic rejects any unilateral British activity in the area subject to the sovereignty dispute, the results of which, on the other hand, it is unable to verify.

On the other hand, the Argentine Republic regrets that the United Kingdom has persisted in carrying out unilateral demining activities, and recalls that the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom entered into Agreements by Exchange of Letters under a sovereignty formula on October 11, 2001 and on August 3, 2006 to carry out a feasibility study on the clearance of land mines and unexploded ordnance from mined areas in the Malvinas Islands. The Final Report was approved by both Governments and presented, separately, to the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties, in November 2007. However, after the presentation of the aforementioned report, in 2009 the United Kingdom stated that it had begun its demining tasks unilaterally and without Argentine participation.

In this regard, for the Argentine Republic it is essential that in those cases in which difficulties arise in the demining process due to the involvement of territories subject to a sovereignty dispute, and that said condition is recognized by the United Nations, cooperation and the technical and humanitarian nature of the tasks related to the demining process must be given priority in order to achieve faster and more effective demining.

Thus, on the occasion of its request for an extension, on October 1, 2009, Argentina presented a schematic plan to implement Article 5 of the Convention in the disputed areas during the 10 years of the extension, in the event that both countries reach an agreement on the clearance of antipersonnel mines.

In March 2019, Argentina requested an extension of the aforementioned period, between March 1, 2020 and March 1, 2023. In this context, it proposed to the United Kingdom to carry out jointly, under a formula of sovereignty and for strictly humanitarian purposes, the demining of the Malvinas Islands. This proposal was rejected. In 2020, again, Argentina proposed to the United Kingdom to conclude the demining process jointly, stating that it was open to defining a

convenient modality for both parties that would help advance this issue. The United Kingdom also rejected the second proposal.

Taking into account that Argentina continues to be prevented from accessing the territory of the Malvinas Islands in order to comply with the obligations assumed under the Convention and that our country cannot verify or endorse the unilateral British demining tasks, I would be very grateful if the request for a 3-year extension made by the Argentine Republic were favorably considered, so that my country can continue to comply with the commitments assumed as a State Party to the Convention.

I reiterate the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

Geneva, March 25th 2022