

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Colombia, France (Chair), Iraq, and Sweden)

Intersessional Meetings 19 – 21 June 2023

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY CROATIA

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

1. Croatia reported that in 2022 it released 55,218,758 square metres, including 15,037,444 square metres by survey and 40,181,314 square metres cleared, in the process destroying 1,098 anti-personnel mines, 25 anti-tank mines, and 2,400 items of unexploded ordnance.
2. Croatia also reported that 488,200 square metres of mined area under the authority of the Ministry of Defence was cleared, in the process destroying 9 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-tank mine, and 711 items of unexploded ordnance. Croatia further reported that the Ministry of Defence cancelled an area of 9,200,000 square metres.
3. Croatia further reported that non-technical surveyed identified 517,410 square metres of mined area.
4. Croatia reported that Police Departments as part of Explosive Ordnance Destruction activities and annual public risk education campaigns destroyed 138 anti-personnel mines, 29 anti-vehicle mines, and 2,678 items of unexploded ordnance.
5. Croatia also reported Požeško-Slavonska County free of contamination.
6. The Committee observed that the information provided by Croatia on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2022 updated workplan. The Committee observed that progress in implementation was less than that projected in Croatia's 2022 updated workplan. The Committee welcomed Croatia providing information on progress in accordance with land release methodology employed, using the Guide to Reporting, in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), and disaggregated by type of contamination (Action #8, Action #22).

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

7. The Committee observed that Croatia provided clarity¹ concerning its remaining challenge (Action #18). Croatia reported a remaining challenge of 149,684,916 square metres in 28 municipalities that are known or suspected to contain 11,898 anti-personnel mines, including confirmed hazardous areas measuring 99,389,044 square metres, and suspected mined areas measuring

¹ "Clarity" has been used when a State Party has provided a summary table of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines according to regions, provinces and districts including the number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines, the number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel and the size of the areas.

50,295,872 square metres. Croatia also reported mined areas under the authority of the Ministry of Defence measuring 19.8 square kilometres.

8. The Committee welcomed the information provided by Croatia and encourages Croatia to provide updated information on remaining challenges under the authority of the Ministry of Defence in a manner consistent with IMAS and disaggregated by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' (Action #22).
9. Action #18 of the Oslo Action Plan (OAP) requests States that have not yet done so to 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. The Committee observed that Croatia was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Croatia on these efforts.
10. Croatia reported on its efforts to establish its baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men through the "Demining and Socio-Economic Integration" project that was carried out in the period 2017-2023, including a full-scale field survey and the establishment of a comprehensive database, gathering, among other elements, the information about different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages. The Committee noted the importance of Croatia continuing to provide updated information on Croatia's efforts in this regard (Action #18).

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

11. The Committee observed that Croatia had a national evidence based and costed plan for clearance and survey in place (Action #2, #19). The Committee recalled that Croatia submitted in 2022, in its updated work plan projected to address a total of 63.7 square kilometres in 2023, 59.9 square kilometres in 2024, and 47.0 square kilometres in 2025 (Action #20).
12. Action #20 of the OAP requests States to annually update their national work plans based on new evidence and report on adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports by 30 April each year, including information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to be addressed annually and on how priorities have been established. The Committee recalled that while Croatia in its updated work plan submitted in 2022 included annual updates to their national work plans based on new evidence and reported on adjusted milestones, including on how priorities have been established. The Committee noted that Croatia had not provided updated information in its Article 7 Report regarding progress in implementation of Action #20 and would welcome further information in this regard.
13. Croatia reported on its efforts to integrate convention implementation activities into national development plans, including projects on sustainable development and the environment (Action #1).
14. Croatia reported making an annual national financial contribution towards implementation, including 69.8% of funds financed through the State budget, 29.7% of funds realised through European Union contributions, and 2.3% of funds contributed through the Swiss-Croatian Cooperation Programme (Action #1).
15. Croatia reported on its efforts to strengthen partnerships, including by well-established priorities and sustainable development through three major components: Economic growth, Environmental stewardship and Social inclusion contained in such projects, such as "Naturavita", "Fearless Velebit" and "Karlovac Karst" and that one of the core purposes of these projects focuses on the protection

of forests, incorporating preservation, rehabilitation and development in the ecological and economic sense (Action #6).

16. Action #3 of the OAP requests States Parties to ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform all areas of Convention implementation and mine action programmes, in order to deliver an inclusive approach. The Committee recalled that while Croatia in its updated work plan submitted in 2022 reported on the results of the “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration” project survey that aims to ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform all areas of Convention implementation, including the establishment of an explosive ordnance database that will serve to direct future projects, Croatia had not provided updated information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts in implementation of Action #3 and would welcome further information in this regard.

17. Action #26 of the OAP requests States to ensure that national strategies and work plans for completion make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion. The Committee observed that Croatia had not provided updated information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts in implementation of Action #26 and would welcome further information in this regard.

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

18. Croatia reported on its efforts to keep national mine action standards (NMAS) up to date in accordance with the latest IMAS, including technical information exchanges on a study on ‘All reasonable effort’ (Action #5).

19. Croatia reported on its efforts to establish and maintain a national information system including insights for every internet user into suspected hazardous areas and positions of mine danger signs (Action #9).

20. Croatia reported on its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance operations, including technical information exchange visits, the hosting the organisation of the 18th International Symposium Mine Action, and a series of new technology tests performed at the Benkovac test site. (Action #27).

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

21. In considering Croatia’s request, the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties (17MSP) requested Croatia to submit updated information on several matters. The Committee observed Croatia had provided the following information:

- Updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts, including resources made available in the Croatian State budget and external financing received to support implementation efforts, including European Union Structural and Cohesion funds, and Cross-border Cooperation funds;
- Progress in continuing land release relative to the commitments made in Croatia’s annual work plan, disaggregated in a manner consistent with the IMAS, including identification of new mined areas, and their impact on annual targets as given in Croatia’s work plan;
- Updates regarding the full range of practical methods used to release land, in line with the latest land release standards, including the use of mechanical assets and animal detection systems in forested areas as well as relevant information on the training of national mine

personnel, operators, in new methodologies and quality control, with reference to relevant national standards, and;

- Updates regarding the structure of Croatia's mine action programme, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion.

22. The Committee would welcome updated information from Croatia on the following decisions of the 17MSP:

- Updates regarding the development and implementation of Croatia's National Mine Action Strategy (2019-2026).

23. The Committee recalled that in considering Croatia's 2018 extension request, the 17MSP requested Croatia to submit to the States Parties updated work plans every two years (i.e. by 30 April 2020, 30 April 2022 and 30 April 2024) for the remaining period covered by the extension. The Meeting noted that these work plans should contain an updated detailed list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines using terminology consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), annual projections of which areas and what area would be dealt with each year during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organisation, matched to a revised detailed budget. The Committee observed that Croatia had acted on the decisions of the 17MSP by submitting an updated work plan to the 18MSP, and the 20MSP and had indicated its intention to submit an updated work plan to the Fifth Review Conference in 2024.

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

24. Action #32 of the OAP requests States to report on mine risk education and other risk reduction programmes (MRE/R) in Article 7 reports, including the methodologies used, the challenges faced and the results achieved, with information disaggregated by gender and age. The Committee observed that while Croatia reported on the methodologies used and the challenges faced, Croatia had not provided information in its Article 7 report on the results achieved, with information disaggregated by gender and age and would welcome further information in this regard.

25. Croatia reported on its efforts to integrate MRE/R with the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, the National Education centre of Civil Protection as well as municipalities and cities within hazardous areas, non-government organisations, and the education system with elementary school age children, and the Police Department as part of, 'Less Arms, Less Tragedies' public campaign (Action #28).

26. Croatia reported on its efforts to prioritise people most at risk, highlighting the project, "Demining and Socio-Economic Integration" which included the establishment of a comprehensive Explosive Ordnance (EO) database, gathering, among other elements, the information about different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages that will serve to direct future projects in this regard (Action #29).

27. Action #30 of the OAP requests States Parties 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 Croatia had not provided updated information in its Article 7 Report on its efforts in implementation of Action #30 and would welcome further information in this regard.

28. Croatia reported on its efforts to build national capacity through the integration of MRE programmes with aligned Ministries, at municipality and city administration levels, as well as schools and non-government organisations, together with an understanding of the affected population's behaviour, risk pattern and coping mechanisms, and, wherever possible, anticipated population movements (Action #31).

VII. Challenges in implementation (OAP Action #8)

29. The Committee observed that Croatia had not provided quality information on challenges in implementation and would welcome further information in this regard.

The OAP country reporting tracker
Article 5 Implementation
Croatia
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS

Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 28 July)
#1	# States Parties that report, having included Convention implementation activities in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, where appropriate						
	% mine-affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention						
#2	% mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place						
#3	% affected States Parties whose national work plans and strategies integrate gender and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account						The Committee would welcome information on Croatia's efforts to integrate gender and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account.
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings						
#5	% States Parties that have updated their national standards to address new challenges and ensure the employment of best practices, taking into consideration the latest IMAS						
#6	# States Parties that report having included mine action related activities within their humanitarian response plans, peacebuilding, development or human rights plans, where relevant						
#8	# States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting						The Committee observed that Croatia had not provided quality information on challenges in implementation and would welcome further information in this regard.
	# States Parties that report on progress and challenges during formal and informal meetings						
#9	% States Parties that report having a sustainable national information management system in place						

SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OF MINED AREAS							
Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 28 July)
#18	% affected States Parties that have established an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline no later than the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021 (and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 19MSP)						The Committee observed that Croatia was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Croatia on these efforts.
	% affected States Parties who report having established their baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men						
#19	% affected States Parties presenting work plans for the implementation of Article 5 by the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties (and MSPs thereafter and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 18MSP)						
#20	# affected States Parties that have reported annual updates and adjusted milestones to their national work plans in their 30 April transparency reports						The Committee would welcome information on Croatia's efforts to report annual updates and adjusted milestones to their national work plans in their 30 April transparency reports.
	# States Parties that have fulfilled their obligations under Article 5						
#21	# States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (for the purpose of this indicator: survey, clear and report)						
#22	% of affected States Parties reporting on the remaining challenge and progress made in accordance with IMAS						
	% of affected States Parties providing survey and clearance data in Article 5 extension requests and Article 7 reports that disaggregates by type of contamination						
#23	% extension requests that include detailed, costed and multi-year work plans for the extension period						
	% extension requests that are submitted in accordance with the process established by the States Parties						
#24	% extension requests that include appropriate plans for risk education and reduction activities						
#25	% States Parties that have completed their Article 5 obligations and that submit voluntary declarations of completion						

#26	% affected States Parties that include provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas in their national strategies and/or completion plans						The Committee would welcome information on Croatia's efforts to include provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas in their national strategies and/or completion plans.
	% affected States Parties that report having put in place sustainable national capacities to address the discovery of previously unknown mined areas						
	% States Parties that discover previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, that apply the decision of the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties						
#27	# States Parties that report promoting research, application and sharing of innovative technological means						
MINE RISK EDUCATION AND REDUCTION							
Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information requested from the Committee (deadline 28 July)
#28	% affected States Parties that report having included mine risk education and reduction programmes in their humanitarian response and protection plans and/or development plans, as well as in their mine action plans, where relevant						
#29	% affected States Parties that report having mine risk education and reduction programmes for all affected populations in place						
	% States Parties that report carrying out mine risk education and reduction activities that collect, analyse and report data disaggregated by gender, age, disability and other diverse needs						
#30	# States Parties that report having established an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for mine risk education and reduction programmes						The Committee would welcome information on Croatia's efforts to report having established an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for mine risk education and reduction programmes.
#31	# States Parties that provide risk education and reduction programmes to affected communities in the case that previously unknown mined areas are discovered						
#32	# States Parties reporting on their mine risk education and other risk reduction programmes and results						

