PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS

MISSION PERMANENTE
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE SERBIE
AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES
ET DES AUTRES ORGANISATIONS
INTERNATIONALES

No. 315-1/2024

27th March 2024

Excellency,

I have the honor to submit the request of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for extension of the deadline for the fulfillment of obligations relating to the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas under Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel mines and on their Destruction.

We would be grateful to the Implementation Support Unit for their support in circulating the request to the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, and other relevant stakeholders, in accordance with relevant rules and established practice.

Please accept Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

Milan Milanović
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Serbia in Geneva

H.E. Ly Thuch
Senior-Minister and First Vice President of the
Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA)
President of the Fifth Review Conference "The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World"

5 Ch. Thury, CH-1206 – Genève, tel. +41 22 839 33 44, fax. +41 22 839 33 59 , e-mail: mission.serbia.ungeneva@mfa.rs

Republic of Serbia

Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of antipersonnel mines in mined areas in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction

Submitted to the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation

Date 31 March 2024

PREPARED FOR STATE PARTY

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

24-26, Kneza Milosa St.
Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: +381 11 306 89 36
Fax: +381 11 306 89 27
E-mail: okn@mfa.rs

Mine Action Centre of the Republic of Serbia
Mr Bojan Glamočlija
Director
Ms Slađana Košutić
Senior Advisor for Planning, International Cooperation and European Integrations

31, Vojvode Toze St.
Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: +381 11 30 45 280
Fax: +381 30 45 281
Email: czrs@czrs.gov.rs

Contents

Abbreviations

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AP KiM	Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija
CHA	Confirmed Hazardous Areas
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
ITF	ITF Enhancing Human Security
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NMAS	National Mine Action Standards
SHA	Suspect Hazardous Areas
SMAC	Mine Action Centre of the Republic of Serbia
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UXO	Unexploded Explosive Ordnance

Executive Summary

1. The former State Union of Serbia and Montenegro ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, on 18 September 2003. The Convention entered into force on 1 March 2004. The continuity to the Convention in relation to the Republic of Serbia was established in accordance with Article 60 of the Charter of the State Union. Serbia is fully committed to the implementation of its obligations under the Convention.
2. In accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Convention, Serbia had an obligation to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in minefield areas under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible, but not later than ten years after the entry into force of the Convention (1 March 2014).
3. At the 13th Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction, which was held in the period 2-6 December 2013, Geneva, Switzerland, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 5-year extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which was **1 March 2019**.
4. In its initial 10-year period for the fulfilment of the Article 5 obligations, 2004-2014, the problem related to contamination by landmines and the progress of Serbia in response to its Article 5 challenge is documented in detail in its first extension request.
5. At the 17th Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention held in the period 26-30 November 2018, Geneva, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 4-year extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which was **1 March 2023.**
6. In its second extension 4-year period for the fulfilment of the Article 5 obligations, 2019-2023, the problem related to contamination by landmines and the progress of Serbia in response to its Article 5 challenge is documented in detail in its second extension request.
7. At the 20th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention held, 21 to 25 November 2022, the Republic of Serbia was granted the request for its third extension, until **December 31, 2024.**
8. In its third extension period for the fulfilment of the Article 5 obligations, March 2023-December 2024, the problem related to contamination by landmines and the progress of Serbia in response to its Article 5 challenge is documented in detail in its third extension request.
9. Since the 20th Meeting in November 2022, when the Republic of Serbia was granted its third extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, the remaining mine contaminated area totalled 3 suspected hazardous areas measuring **561,800 square metres** in the Municipality of Bujanovac, plus previously unknown suspected mined areas discovered in Bujanovac.

Table: Summary of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of March 2022

Municipality	Village	Number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines	Number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines	Total number of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines	Amount of area known to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)	Amount of area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)	Total amount of area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)
	Dobrosin	/	1	1	/	28,000	28,.000
	Ravno Bučje	/	1	1	/	390,300*	390,300*
	Končulj	/	1	1	/	143,500	143,500
Total	**3**	**/**	**3**	**3**	**/**	**561,800***	**561,800***

10. Since the previous request, in the period September - October 2022, two clearance projects by the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) were implemented in the Municipality of Bujanovac, with a total area of 171.500 square metres cleared. The funds for the projects were provided by the Serbian Government from the 2022 national funds which were matched, through ITF Enhancing Human Security, by the Republic of Korea and U.S. funding. In late 2023, one technical survey project totalling 122.200 square metres commenced, but had to be delayed due to unfavourable weather conditions. The project has been funded by the Serbian Government from the 2023 national funds which were matched, through ITF Enhancing Human Security, by the Republic of Korea and U.S. funding. The project was finished on 28 February 2024.

Table showing progress against milestones 2022-2024

Year	Projected milestones		Cleared area (square metres)	Cancelled area (square metres)	Reduced area (square metres)	Total area released (square metres)	Number of anti-personnel mines destroyed	Number of other explosive items destroyed	Size of newly identified/ suspect hazardous areas
	Survey	Clearance							
2022	/	561,800*	171,500	/	/	171,500	/	4	/
2023	/	Subject to survey and assessment	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
2024		Subject to survey and assessment	/	/	122,200	122,200	/	1	/
Total	/		**171,500**	/	**122,200**	**293,700**	/	**5**	/

11. There are a number of circumstances that have impeded Serbia from complying with its period of third extension request. Particular issues faced by Serbia are as follows:

-Unregistered mine contaminated areas: The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and have not been planted in specific patterns, which aggravates demining efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.

-Newly discovered mine suspected areas in Bujanovac, in October 2019 and in August 2021. However, the data on the scope of the contamination of the newly discovered areas are not available at the time of writing this update.

-Climactic conditions: Contaminated areas are inaccessible during some periods of the year causing operation delays.

-Contamination other than mines: Specificity and complexity of the problem presents the fact that apart from mines still remaining in the territory of Serbia, Serbia also encounters numerous challenges related to clearance of areas contaminated with unexploded cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, as well as residual contamination and clearance operations triggered by infrastructure development projects.

- **Pending of implementation of non-technical survey project** of Bujanovac municipality for which Serbia requested previous extension request in order to gather necessary information to design a workplan and project with greater certainty the amount of areas, the size of each area and the amount of time matched with a detail budget that will be required to complete Serbia's Article 5 obligations. A contractor has been selected and the project was expected to commence in 2023, however, due to certain security concerns, relevant Serbian authorities estimated that the commencement of the field operations should be delayed. SHA comprises the area within the Ground Safety Zone along the administrative line with Kosovo and Metohija.

12. The remaining mine contamination presents a severe socioeconomic impact on communities in the municipality of Bujanovac. This municipality is the most underdeveloped municipality in Serbia. Mine contaminated areas affect safety of people. Presence of mines hinders safe exploitation of woods, development of cattle breeding and mushroom picking, which happen to be the main source of income of locals and in that way mines additionally impoverish them. In addition, road communications are blocked, environment affected, and fire risks increased.

13. The Republic of Serbia's achievements regarding the fulfilment of its obligation under Article 5 have been significant so far. Our aim is to fulfil the remaining obligations as soon as possible. At the same time, we are facing a number of difficulties, and the most important of these difficulties is securing the necessary multi-year financial resources. Furthermore, Serbia also has to address contamination by cluster munitions, air bombs-rockets and other UXO, which often block development and infrastructural projects. Funding from donors for mine action activities have severely diminished through the years, with donors preference to provide funds for cluster munitions clearance.

Requested Period of Extension

14.. Having in mind all the aspects of this issue, especially inadequate financial resources, the remaining area to be cleared, and its characteristics, the Republic of Serbia is requesting an extension of the deadline for fulfilling of its mine clearance obligations under the Convention for a period of 2-years (31 December 2024-31 December 2026). The rational for the period of the request includes a realistic period for Serbia to undertake non-technical survey of Bujanovac municipality and gather the necessary information to develop a fifth request including a workplan for completion of Article 5 that will be submitted 31 March 2026. During the period of this request, Serbia will put maximum effort into clearing all known confirmed hazardous areas as of March 2024 measuring 268,100 square metres. National and international funds for 2024 clearance operations have been secured, for the confirmed hazardous area and for the areas that will be the subject to the non-technical survey project.

15. During the two-year extension period Serbia is projecting that it will recruit survey teams, complete non-technical survey and analyse all data in order to develop a forward-looking work plan and complete land release of suspected and confirmed hazardous areas. The aim is to project with greater certainty the amount of areas, the size of each area and the amount of time matched with a detail budget that will be required to complete Serbia's Article 5 obligations.

Table: Summary of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of March 2024

Municipality	Village	Number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines	Number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines	Total number of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines	Amount of area known to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)	Amount of area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)	Total amount of area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)
Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje	/	1	1	/	268,100	268,100
Bujanovac	**Đorđevac, Veliki Trnovac, Končulj,Lučani, Dobrosin, Nesalce**	/	5	5	/	/	4,467,643
Total	**1**	/	**6**	**6**	/	**268,100**	**4,735,743**

Demining milestones:

16. The area of 268,100 square metres will be released as follows:

2024: An area of 268,100 sqm, which will include:

- Municipality of Bujanovac, Village of Ravno Bučje

2024-2026: Non-technical Survey of at 6 suspected mined areas with an estimated area of 4,467,643 square metres Bujanovac Municipality .

Non-technical survey of Bujanovac municipality.

17. The starting areas for non-technical survey that will include all of Bujanovac Municipality are 5 suspected areas measuring 4,467,643 square metres:

- Area of 1,777,367 m^2 – in the area of the village Djordjevac, which borders on the north side with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0240/20 and with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0193-4/17.

- Area of 156,125 m^2 – between the villages of Veliki Trnovac and Končulj, which on the south side borders with the Project "Turijsko brdo 1" 0134/12, and on the north side with the Project "Končulj – Transmission Line 1 and 2", number 0240/21, which included AP mine and UXO contaminated area.
- Area of 1,317,575 m^2 – located in the area of the village of Končulj, between the villages Končulj and Dobrosin, which is bordered on the north by the Project "Končulj Singerit" 0209/18.
- Area of 830,383 m^2 – located between the villages of Lučane and Dobrosin, which on the north side borders with the Projects "Dobrosin" 0199/18, "Dobrosin 1" 0245/21, and on the west and east side borders with the Project for Integrated Approach to Mine Risk Land Release 0179/15.
- Area of 286,193 m^2 in the village of Nesalce, located west of the Nesalce village, on the local road to the village of Vrban.
- **Please see in the detailed narrative p.32 Google Map of Bujanovac Municipality with suspected hazardous areas (268.100 sqm) and newly identified suspected hazardous areas (NTS area) (shown in white). *Please note that these white polygons shown on the map represent a rough illustration of the sites where fire forest broke out and explosions could be heard. Furthermore, there were statements by firefighters and locals. However, no survey has yet taken place.***

18. For newly identified suspect hazardous areas discovered in 2019 and 2021 during forest fires, land release needs to be done, beginning with non – technical survey – the use of all non-technical means, including desk assessments, analysis of available data and a wide range of other information gathering and analysis functions, as well as physical visits to field locations, will be conducted in line with the National Standards of Serbia. These elements will contribute to identifying, accessing, collecting, reporting and using information to help define where/if mines and ERW are to be found, as well as where they are not, and to support land cancellation, reduction and clearance decision making processes.

19. SMAC has tentatively provided donor funds to start a non-technical survey project, that will include 2 mixed survey teams (1 Serbian and 1 Albanian team of 2 surveyors each), which will be fully trained and equipped to conduct required tasks. These activities will be supervised and monitored by SMAC and in cooperation with the local authorities.

20. The project will take up to 1 year and will focus on the areas where forests fires occurred and explosions could be heard, but will also include all other areas in Bujanovac to gather either indirect or direct evidence of landmines and/or other explosive ordnance. Upon completion of the survey SMAC will have a clearer picture of the remaining landmine contamination and will draft a fifth request for submission 31 March 2026, including a work plan for releasing these areas as soon as possible.

21. Simultaneously with survey activities, mine risk education and reduction (MRE) activities will be conducted in all 59 villages of the Municipality of Bujanovac.

Demining in the Municipality of Bujanovac (2024-2026)

Year	Municipality	Village	Estimated mine suspected area to be subject to technical survey/clearance (square metres)	Source of funding and Amount*
2024	Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje, Đorđevac, Dobrosin, Končulj	268,100	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF (500,000 EUR)
2025		Lučani, Veliki Trnovac, Nesalce	Subject to survey and assessment	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding (500,000 EUR)
2026		Development of Technical Survey and clearance workplan	Subject to survey and assessment	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding (500,000 EUR)
	Total		**268,100 + newly identified mine contaminated areas**	**780,000 EUR +** and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding **1,500,000 EUR**

Regarding NTS, the funds have been secured for 2024 and 2025.

Summary Plan for NTS

22. Taking into account the specific situation with contamination in the Municipality of Bujanovac (groups of mines and not classic minefields), this plan is subject to change, so a detailed plan will be created after the training of survey team, first NTS activities, and collecting more detailed information on the field.

23. First areas to begin with NTS activities will be Djordjevac, Končulj and Dobrosin as communities with the largest starting areas for non-technical survey, thus the communities which are potentially the most vulnerable to mines and other UXO.

24. Regarding the analysis of the survey results, monthly meetings between the SMAC and the survey teams will be organized, so that the survey teams present the achieved results, based on the planned activities for that month. These meetings will be used for making plans and organizing activities for the next month.

- Development of technical survey & clearance work plan will be done periodically as relevant information is collected on the areas suspected of being contaminated by mines and other UXO.
- The final analysis of all performed activities will be performed after the completion of all MRE and NTS activities.

Activity	Comment	Month (2024/2025																		
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct
Finalizing procedures with ITF and procurement of equipment		x																		
Recruitment	It is planned to recruit minimum 4 surveyors + 1 operational manager	x																		
			x																	
Training of trainers	SMAC personnel will be trained by international instructor		X	x																
Training of survey teams	SMAC personnel under supervision of interantional instructor will train survey teams				x	x														
Desktop Survey	First step - SMAC staff with surveyors					X	X													
Deployment						X	X													
Area of 1.777.367m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**						x	x												
Area of 1.317.575m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**							x	x											
Area of 830.383m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**								x	X										
Area of 286.193m2	**Engaged 2 surveyors**									x	x									
Area of 156.125m2	**Engaged 2 surveyors**									x	x									
Survey of additional areas discovered during NTS																				
												x	x							
SMAC Analysis of survey results	**At the end of each month and final analysis**					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Periodical analysis by Project supervisor							x			x			x							
Final analysis by international instructor or Project supervisor															x	x	X			
Development of technical survey & clearance workplan																		x	X	x

Mine Risk Education Plan in 59 villages of Bujanovac

Table that shows initial plan for MRE activities in schools and local communities in Bujanovac municipality													
Primary School	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Aug
Branko Radičević	x												
Naim Frašeri		x											
Ali Bektaši			x										
Bora Stanković				x									
Miđeni					x								
Sami Frašeri						x							
Vuk Stefanović Karadžić							x						
Desanka Maksimović								x					
Dragomir Trajković									x				
Muarem Kadriju										x			
School for music											x		
High school													
Sveti Sava												x	
30 Local communities - by 3 each month													
Analysis by SMAC team	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Periodic analysis by International instructor	X			X			x						
Final analysis by international instructor or Project supervisor													x

25. Students in primary and high schools will be divided in 3 age groups, girls and boys, by:
age 7-10;
age 11-14;
age 15-18;

26. First school to begin with will be "Branko Radičević" - as primary school with the most pupils - over 1.400 pupils with 4 separate classes.

27. The first task of the surveyors will be to collect precise data on the exact number of pupils, the school's working hours, separate classes, and other important information, taking into account that the surveyors will be working with girls and boys in an environment that is culturally sensitive.

28. After collecting these information more detailed plan about MRE activities by schools and age groups will be developed;

29. Bujanovac has 30 local communities, in which surveyors will also conduct MRE activities including age group: 19 - 65, woman and man. By conducting MRE activities in local communities suryeors must apply appropriate methods, when working with man and woman in an environment that is culturally sensitive.

30. First local communities to begin with MRE activities will be Đorđevac, Končulj and Dobrosin, as communities with the largest starting areas for non-technical survey, thus the communities which are potentially the most vulnerable to mines and other UXO.

31. By conducting MRE activities surveyors will be collecting information about potential contamination of mines and other UXO.

32. In 2015, the funds (100,000 EUR) for demining operations have been allocated from the Serbian State Budget for the first time. Despite the difficult economic situation in the country and modest funds from the National Budget, we will endeavour to secure funding of demining either by submitting projects to ITF, or lobbying with foreign donors to provide funds for implementation of projects. The funds from the Serbian State Budget will be provided to support the on-going work of the SMAC – salaries of the staff, running costs (electricity, water, heating), office and

consumption material costs, fuel costs, maintenance of vehicles, costs of the SMAC staff insurance – as well as survey activities, development of adequate project tasks for demining/clearance of locations confirmed to be contaminated by mines, cluster munitions and other UXO, follow-up of the implementation of project tasks and conduct of demining quality assurance and quality control.

33. **In the period 2022-2024,** the Serbian Government has allocated **780,000 EUR** for demining operations (2022=260,000 EUR; 2023=260,000 EUR; 2024=260,000 EUR).

34. We expect the Serbian Government will continue to allocate the funds for demining operations throughout the requested extension period. According to some rough estimations, in addition to funds from national budget **(780,000 EUR),** with an estimated **1,500,000 EUR** in resource mobilised from international donors.

Assumptions and Risks

35. If the funds for demining operations are provided, namely if international funding is made available for clearance of anti-personnel mines, national funding continues to flow for the implementation of the programme and no additional mine areas are discovered ahead of completion, Serbia intends, by the use of methods such as cancelation and reduction through non-technical and technical survey, manual demining, mechanical demining (where applicable) to complete clearance in Serbia as soon as possible.

36. **Note: In the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, there are mined areas, as well as areas contaminated with cluster bombs remaining after the armed conflicts." Pursuant to Resolution 1244 of the United Nations Security Council (Annex II, item 6), it is envisaged that after the withdrawal, an agreed number of the Republic of Serbia personnel, will be allowed to return to perform certain functions, including marking and clearing minefields. As this provision of Annex II has not been implemented, this issue is still within the competence of UNMIK in accordance with Resolution 1244. "**

Detailed Narrative

I. Introduction

Serbia acceded to the Convention on 18 September 2003, and the Convention entered into force for Serbia on 1 March 2004. In its initial transparency report, Serbia reported areas under its jurisdiction or control in which antipersonnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced. In accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, Serbia had undertaken to destroy or ensure the destruction of all antipersonnel mines in these areas as soon as possible but not later than 1 March 2014.

On 27 March 2013, Serbia submitted a request for extension that was granted at the 13th Meeting of the States Parties, held in Geneva, 2-6 December 2013. The Republic of Serbia was granted a 5-year extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which was 1 March 2019.

At the 17th Meeting of the States Parties of the Convention, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 4-year extension of the deadline for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which was **1 March 2023.**

At the 20th Meeting of the States Parties, which was held in the period 21-25 November 2022, Geneva, the Republic of Serbia was granted a 21-month extension for fulfilment of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, which was **31 December 2024.** In their request Serbia indicated that their remaining challenge totalled **561,800 square metres** in the Municipality of Bujanovac with 3 areas suspected to contain antipersonnel mines, **plus newly discovered mine suspected areas in the Bujanovac Municipality.**

Furthermore, as we emphasized that, Serbia, at the same time, had to deal with clearance of areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, since they also block substantial resources and hinder implementation of development and infrastructure projects. In this way, Serbia's effort to fulfil its obligations under Article 5 forms part of its overall response to address all explosive hazards in Serbia.

II. Origin of the Article 5 implementation challenge

The original problem related to contamination by antipersonnel landmines can be found in relevant sections of Serbia's 2013, 2018, 2022 extension requests.

III. Nature and extent of the Article 5 challenge at the beginning of the previous request

In its previous request Serbia indicated that their remaining challenge totalled 3 suspected hazardous areas measuring **561,800 square metres in the Municipality of Bujanovac, in additional newly identified suspected contaminated areas of unknown size in Bujanovac Municipality.**

Nature and extent of progress made: quantitative aspects

Table showing Remaining challenge 2022

Table: Summary of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of March 2022							
Municipality	**Village**	**Number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines**	**Number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines**	**Total number of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines**	**Amount of area known to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)**	**Amount of area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)**	**Total amount of area known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines(square metres)**
Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje	/	1	1	/	390,300*	390,300*
	Končulj	/	1	1	/	143,500	143,500
	Dobrosin	/	1	1	/	28,000	28,000
Total	**3**	**/**	**3**	**3**	**/**		**561,800***

2022

2 projects were implemented resulting in the clearance of 171,500 square metres, with 4 UXOs found and destroyed, in 2022 in the Municipality of Bujanovac. In 2022, the Government of Serbia allocated around 260,000 EUR from the state budget for demining operations. These funds were matched through ITF Enhancing Human Security with available donor funds (the US and Republic of Korea donation).

2023 started -2024 completed

The implementation of 1 project, which resulted in the technical survey of 122.200 square metres and 1 UXO found and destroyed, has been financed by the funds which the Government of the Republic of Serbia allocated for humanitarian demining operations in the Bujanovac Municipality. These funds have been matched with the funds of the Government of the USA and the Government of the Republic of Korea, through the ITF Enhancing Human Security.

Table: Areas contaminated with anti-personnel mines released during the previous extension request (March 2022 up to March 2024)

Municipality	**Cancelled area (square metres)**	**Reduced area (square metres)**	**Cleared area (square metres)**	**Total area released (square metres)**	**Number of anti-personnel mines destroyed**	**Number of other explosive items destroyed**
Bujanovac	/	122.200	171,500	293,700	/	5
Total	**/**	**122,200**	**171,500**	**293,700**	**/**	**5**

The following table highlights the total mine clearance progress to date:

Year	Cleared area (square metres)	Reduced area (square metres)	Cancelled area (square metres)	Total area released (square metres)	Number of anti-personnel mines destroyed	Number of other explosive items destroyed	Size of newly identified/ suspect hazardous areas
2022	171,500	/	/	171,500	/	4	*
2023-2024		122,200	/	122,200	/	1	*
Total	**171,500**	**122,200**	/	**293,700**	/	5	*

*The data on the scope of the contamination of the newly identified suspect hazardous areas are not available at the time of writing this request.

UXOs found on projects in Bujanovac

Artillery grenade fuse,76 mm artillery grenade bullet, 40 mm artillery grenade bullet, hand grenade, 82 mm mortar mine

Other contamination

In addition to the landmines, the Republic of Serbia suffers from additional contamination by cluster munitions contamination, and by Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) as follows:

- It is suspected that the area of 610,137 square metres has been still contaminated with cluster munitions resulting from 1999 bombing.
- It is assumed that since the 1999 bombing, around 150 air bombs – rockets weighing up to 930 kg are located throughout the country in locations in the ground at a depth of up to 20 m, as well as in the Sava River and the Danube River.
- It is suspected that after fire and explosions in military depots in Paraćin, Vranje, Kraljevo, Požarevac, Valjevo, Novi Sad, Smederevo, Raška, Grdelica, Kragujevac, outside of military objects, in an area of around 18.000.000 square metres, there are various types of ERW.
- It is suspected that in the Sava River, in the area of the Jamena Village, there are improvised mines remaining from the 1991-1995 conflicts.

On the border with Romania, in the Đerdap Gorge, on the Danube River, in the vicinity of Prahovo, in 1944, German war vessels containing large quantity of unexploded ordnance, including anti-ship mines, were sunk. In 2006, a survey was conducted and the positions of 23 vessels were determined as well as the existence of various types of UXO and anti-ship mines on 4 vessels. These UXO pose a threat to people and environment and significantly obstruct navigation in this part of the Danube. The activities related to the data acquisition, regarding shipwrecks in Prahovo, have been performed also in the period September 2020 – November 2020. In addition to the 21 known wrecks, from the previous surveys, an additional number of 18 wrecks were identified during the preliminary analysis, with 603 UXO suspicious objects identified in the sectors around shipwrecks, representing potential danger for removal of the 39 shipwrecks. Given the above and the complexity of the problem, Serbia would be interested in receiving international financial assistance for conducting clearance operations. SMAC monitors the implementation of technical survey project "Sunken German Second World War Fleet from the Danube River near Prahovo", Negotin, No. 0300/23, which was developed based on the request by the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia. The location where the technical survey is carried out is located in Prahovo between 857 km and 862 km on the common section of the Danube river between Serbia and Romania, Municipality of Negotin.

The implementation of the first and second phases of the project is in progress, which aims to:

- examine shipwrecks of the sunken German fleet and the river bed for the presence of ERW using appropriate technical interventions, on the stretch of the Danube River between Serbia and Romania from 857 km to 862 km and at a depth of up to 23.22 m above sea level
- determine the existence of ERW on and within each individual shipwreck (type of ERW, their condition, quantity, place and position, depth) and provide direct evidence of it.
- determine the existence of ERW in the river bed (type of ERW, their condition, quantity, place and position, depth), provide direct evidence of this and determine precise boundaries of the riverbed surface where ERW pollution is present and where it is not.
- analysis of data on the state of ERW and assessment of which ERW would cause an explosion when moved and as such must be destroyed at the place of discovery and ERW that can be moved and as such can be safely extracted, transported and destroyed at another location.

Type and origin of the overall contamination in the Republic of Serbia

Cluster Munitions	**Anti-personnel Mines**	**AirBombs - Rockets**	**Inland Waterways**	**Other UXO**
1999 bombing	From the period 2000-2001 during conflict situations along the administrative line with Kosovo and Metohija	1999 bombing	1999 bombing and World War II	Former military depot explosions
~ 600.000 м²	**~ 268,100 м²**	**~ 150 locations suspected to contain air bombs**	**12 locations on the Danube and Sava rivers**	**~ 18.000.000 м²**

Areas containing cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets, other UXO

Despite the complexity of mine related problems Serbia is facing, significant results have been achieved in the field of cluster munitions clearance, and other UXO demining including:
- Railways rehabilitated and reconstructed;
- Residential buildings constructed;
- Facilities and supporting infrastructure for holding the international specialized exhibition "EXPO BELGRADE 2027" constructed;
- Reconstruction and construction of electricity transmission network has been enabled;
- Safe execution of earthworks and construction works on the gas pipeline route;
- Safe construction of a port;
- Safe construction of water supply and sewerage lines and roads.

Selection and prioritisation of these projects is done by the Serbian Government.

ERW Clearance projects.

In the previous period, there has been the intensification of the interaction of mine action and infrastructure development in the context of the current expansion of construction in Serbia and the need to create conditions for safe execution of infrastructure projects that are a prerequisite for future investments in Serbia. Demands for clearing the terrain from UXO have been high. Taking into account the fact that armed conflicts of different intensities took place in the territory of Serbia during the two World Wars, as well as the 1999 bombing, it can be reasonably assumed that the land and facilities in the affected areas were significantly polluted with different types of UXO. All these projects have been funded by relevant Serbian authorities (Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Building Directorate of Serbia, etc.)

Areas containing cluster munitions

In the period March 2022–March 2024, cluster munitions have been cleared from the area of 413,069 square metres, detecting and destroying in the process a total of 32 pieces of cluster munitions. Cleared land has been returned to safely use.

Table: Areas contaminated with cluster munitions released during the previous extension period (March 2022 up to March 2024)

Municipality	Cleared area (square metres)	Number of cluster munitions destroyed	Number of other explosive items destroyed
Bujanovac	281,169	16	/
Tutin	131,900	16	/
Total	**413,069**	**32**	**32**

The following table highlights the total cluster munitions clearance progress to date:

Year	Cleared area (square metres)	Number of cluster munitions destroyed	Number of other explosive items destroyed
2022	281,169	16	/
2023	131,900	16	/
2024			
Total	**413,069**	**32**	/

In the period March 2022-January 2024, 19 ERW clearance projects, totalling 1,849,251.60 + 2,162,663.18 sqm developed by SMAC were implemented which contributed, among other to: safe execution of earthworks and construction works on the gas pipeline route; safe construction of national stadium; safe construction of a port; safe construction of water supply and sewerage lines and roads, safe construction of railways, safe construction of facilities and supporting infrastructure for holding the international specialized exhibition "EXPO BELGRADE 2027", etc.

Year	Cleared area (square metres)	Number of UXO destroyed
2022	1,849,251.6	20,759
2023	2,162,663.18	182
Total	**4,011,914.78**	**20,941**

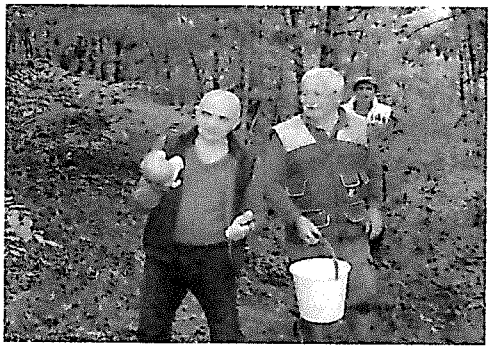
IV. Nature and extent of progress made: qualitative aspects

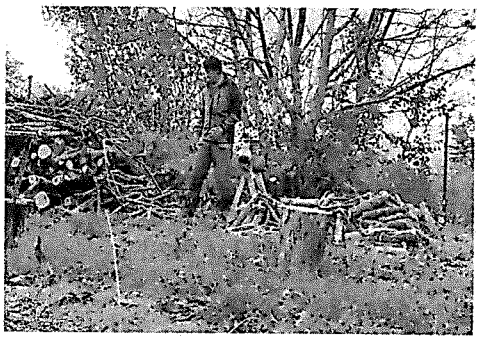
The clearance of anti-personnel mines has resulted in qualitative positive impacts on the humanitarian and socio-economic factors, as given below.

Humanitarian and socio-economic progress enablement of demining operations

Demining of mine contaminated areas in the Municipality of Bujanovac has had a number of qualitative benefits including the following:

- Clearance has contributed and will contribute to the safety of the local population; In the period 2022-2023, since the previous extension request, there were NO accidents;
- Conditions for safe exploitation of forest, picking of mushrooms and development of cattle breeding have been created;
- Improvement of interethnic relations in a multi-ethnic environment such as the Municipality of Bujanovac (Serbs, Albanians, Roma)
- Environment protection and protection against fire have been significantly increased;
- Given that these municipalities are the most underdeveloped municipalities in Serbia, for the purpose of their development and prevention of migration of their inhabitants due to economic reasons, demining will enable implementation of development projects, such as for example construction of solar plants, development of wood industry, namely exploitation and processing of wood.
-



Resources made available to achieve the progress in implementation

National

As regards **national** inputs, in 2015, the funds (100,000 EUR) for demining operations have been allocated from the **Serbian State Budget for the first time,** which corresponded to the decision of the States Parties in granting the first request, when it was noted that Serbia should cover part of the demining cost and that demonstrating national ownership in such a manner could help facility cooperation and assistance efforts. **Ever since 2015, Serbia allocates annually national funds for demining operations in Bujanovac.**

In 2022 and 2023, the national funds for demining operations amounted 260,000 EUR for 2022 and 260,000 EUR for 2023, which SMAC matched with donor funds and used for the implementation of our demining projects.

International Support

As regards to **international** funding, in 2022, the funds in the amount of 283,883.32 US$ for demining operations have been donated, through ITF, by the US State Department and the Republic of Korea.

In 2023, the funds in the amount of 105,520 US$ have been donated, through ITF, by the US State Department, and the Republic of Korea.

Year	National Input for Demining Operations (EURO)	International Input for Demining Operations (USD)
2022	260,000 EUR	283,883.32 US$
2023	260,000 EUR	105,520 US$
Total	**520,000 EUR**	**389,403.32 US$**

The funds from the **Serbian State Budget** have been also provided to support the ongoing work of the SMAC – salaries of the staff, running costs (electricity, water, heating), office and consumption material costs, fuel costs, maintenance of vehicles, costs of the SMAC staff insurance – as well as survey activities, development of adequate project tasks for demining/clearance of locations confirmed to be contaminated by mines, cluster munitions and other UXO, follow-up of the implementation of project tasks and conduct of demining quality assurance and quality control.

As of 2019, on an annual basis, and such was the case in 2023, from the Serbian State Budget is allocated around 350,000.00 EUR for the work of the SMAC. In previous years the budget amounted around 150,000.00 EUR

As regards the **cluster munitions clearance**, in the period 2022-2023, the funds in the amount of **314,909.28 US$** provided by **the US State Department and the Republic of Korea through ITF.**

In 2022-2023, the Republic of Korea donated, through ITF, 44,580.16 US$, for the implementation of the joint project of SMAC and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, which included **rehabilitation of mine victims** at the University Rehabilitation Institute Soča, Slovenia.

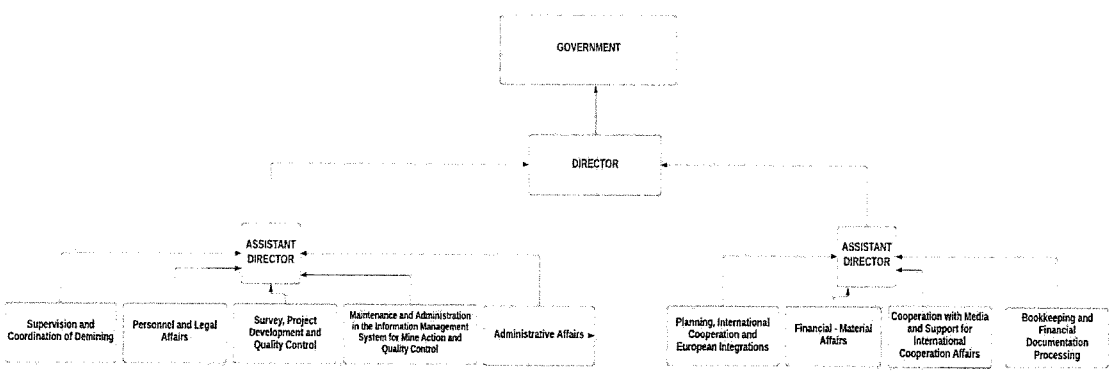
- ***National demining structure***

In order to respond to contamination, the Mine Action Centre (SMAC) was established in 2002, initially as a federal body within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until 2003 when, through a decision by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, it became the republic body, first as the Service of the Government and later on as a separate organization. The scope of the work of the SMAC has been determined by the Law on Ministries. The funds for its work are allocated from the Serbian state budget.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopts the Work Plan of the SMAC, as well as the Annual Report on the work of the SMAC. The Director is appointed by the Government and has the status of a civil servant holding position.

As at the beginning of 2020, when the Government approved the new Rule Book on Internal Organization and Systematization of Work Positions in SMAC, there were 8 people employed at SMAC –Director plus 1 Assistant Director for Legal Affairs and Operational Support and 1 Assistant Director for Economic Affairs, International Cooperation and European Integrations plus 5 clerks.
As of August 2023, when the Government approved the new Rule Book on Internal Organization and Systematization of Work Positions in SMAC, there are 12 people employed at SMAC - Director plus 1 Assistant

Director for Legal Affairs and Operational Support and 1 Assistant Director for Economic Affairs, International Cooperation and European Integrations plus 9 clerks - Supervision and Coordination of Demining; Position for Personnel and Legal Affairs; Survey, Project Development and Quality Control; Maintenance and Administration in the Information Management System for Mine Action and Quality Control; Administrative Affairs; Planning, International Cooperation and European Integrations; Financial - Material Affairs; Cooperation with Media and Support for International Cooperation Affairs; Bookkeeping and Financial Documentation Processing.



The SMAC does not directly conduct demining, but conducts expert works in the field of humanitarian demining related to the following:

- coordination of demining/clearance in the Republic of Serbia;
- preparation of regulation in the field of demining/clearance;
- collecting, processing and storing of data and keeping records on the areas contaminated with mines, cluster munitions and other UXO, on demined/cleared areas;
- survey of areas suspected to be contaminated with mines, cluster munitions or other UXO;
- development of demining plans and projects and following their implementation;
- making of demining project tasks;
- issuing approvals to companies and other organizations for the conduct of demining/clearance operations;
- approving execution plans of a contracted company or organization for a particular area and issuing a certificate that the particular area has been demined/cleared of mines, cluster munitions and other UXO;
- quality control of demining operations;
- introducing population to mine/UXO risk; participation in training of personnel for a conduct of surveys and demining/clearance;
- following application of international contracts and standards in the field of demining, and;
- achieving international cooperation, as well as other works determined by the Law.

Demining operations in accordance with the SMAC projects and IMAS conduct specialized companies and other organizations registered for such works, and which are technically equipped and employ adequate staff, and as such accredited by the Ministry of Interior – Sector for Emergency Management.

As of 1 January 2014, according to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior is responsible for accrediting demining operators. Previously, the SMAC was responsible for accrediting demining operators.

The Ministry of Interior issues accreditations for demining companies/organizations.

Tender procedures for the selection of contractors for implementation of humanitarian demining /clearance projects funded from international donations through ITF is carried out by the ITF. Selection of

contractors for demining operations that are funded in other manner conducts an investor and based on projects made by the SMAC. Later on the SMAC does an oversight of implementation of these projects, QA & QC, etc.

Demolition of mines, cluster munitions and other UXO in Serbia is done by the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia.

As previously stated, in addition to mine contamination, the Republic of Serbia faces with extensive ERW contamination. Some Turkish (gas pipeline), Chinese (factories) and other companies have requested for the land to be cleared prior to implementation of infrastructure projects. In such cases the Serbian government is obliged to ensure that the land is free of ERW; it tenders out clearance projects to local commercial companies. This type of work seems to be increasing and is taking an increasingly larger share of SMAC's workload, when it comes to coordination and quality management. However, no additional funding to undertake these roles has been provided, except for the increase of the number of SMAC employees and daily activities.

SMAC is also receiving requests from the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure to clear former military compounds, bombed during the NATO strikes, that are intended to pass from MoD into civilian use. Such requests have been increasing over the past years.

Information Management

SMAC has been using its own information management system since its foundation.

In early 2020, following initial discussions several years previously, SMAC informally discussed with the GICHD the possibility of installing IMSMA. In August 2022, SMAC signed an agreement with the GICHD to enable it to support SMAC to implement IMSMA Core over a project period of one year.

In March 2023, the GICHD visited SMAC to hold a workshop with relevant stakeholders to better understand the context and the requirements of SMAC with the aim of defining and planning the next steps of their IMSMA Core Implementation.

SMAC is continuing its work on implementation of IMSMA Core and establishment of a centralized database aimed at improving data quality, accessibility, and sharing at SMAC and with external stakeholders, as well as bringing informed decisions when it comes to prioritization and planning of activities.

Overview of the review and/or drafting of new mine action strategies

The report on the mine situation is regularly submitted to the Republic Headquarters for Emergency Management, which is adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

SMAC develops annual work plans and medium term plans, which are adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia

A new Decree on Protection against ERW is about to be adopted by the Government – it was developed by SMAC and Ministry of Interior.

The new Decree, developed by SMAC in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, will support Serbia's efforts to implement its remaining challenge as efficiently and effectively as possible in the following manner:

- Introduce land release concept, not defined in the former decree;
- Streamline and improve monitoring and evaluation of demining operations;
- Introduce the need for development of national standards.

The report on the mine situation is submitted to the Republic Headquarters for Emergency Management, which is adopted by the Conclusion of the Government of the Republic of Serbia

In 2014, following the initiative of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transportation and Infrastructure has formed a Coordination Body for Gender Equality as a national coordinating mechanism for gender equality in the Republic of Serbia. It recognizes the importance of improvement position of women, specially focusing on increasing the number of women entrepreneurs, as well as their equal participation in management bodies in education, science, culture, information, sports, agriculture, rural development, etc.

In 2023, within the Norwegian People's Aid Project *Enhancing Quality Management Systems of National Mine Action Authorities and Centers in Western Balkans*, SMAC has been engaged in the development of National standards together with the expert from the Norwegian People's Aid. By the end of 2023, three chapters have been developed - land release, glossary and quality management. Further National Standards are planned to be developed in the coming period, e.g. chapter on IM.

Capacity Building actions of relevant mine action authority, Clearance Operators and related Ministries and Organisations

In the period 2022-2023, SMAC staff attended the following courses:

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

In the period from September 13 to 20, 2022, in Rome, the Regional Course on Quality Management in Mine Action was held for representatives of the Balkan countries. In addition to representatives of SMAC, other participants from Serbia included representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the company JUGOIMPORT SDPR - PMC Engineering ltd.

In the period from November 7 to 11, 2022, 2022, in Spietz, Switzerland, the 86th Partnership for Peace Training Course on International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and Conformance was attended by SMAC representative.

In the period from 29 May 2023 until 9 June 2023, SMAC representatives participated in Mine Action Information Management System Administrator (IMSMA Core Administrator) training course, which was held in Spietz, Swiss Confederation, within the framework of the Partnership for Peace Work Program, implemented by the Swiss Government, through the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (DDPS) and the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining.

Norwegian People's Aid

In the period from December 13 to 14, 2022, in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, SMAC participated at the regional workshop, organized by NPA and entitled "Assessment of needs and planning to improve the quality management capacities of national/state mine action authorities".

In the period from May 8 to 12, 2023, in Podgorica, Montenegro, SMAC participated in a quality management course in the field of demining and mine action, which was organized by the Norwegian People's Aid, in cooperation with the Rescue and Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Montenegro. This course was conducted as part of the Norwegian People's Aid project that improves the quality management systems of national mine action authorities in the Western Balkans, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

In the organization of the Norwegian People's Aid, in the period from May 22 to 26, 2023, in Belgrade, at the SMAC, a course on quality management in the field of demining and mine action was held. Fourteen trainees from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the company Jugoimport SDPR attended the course. The course was implemented within the framework of the Norwegian People's Aid project that improves the quality management systems of national mine action authorities in the Western Balkans.

In the period from November 28 to 29, 2023, in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, SMAC participated in the regional workshop "Lessons Learned and Next Steps", organized by the Norwegian People's Aid. (NPA). The workshop "Lessons learned and next steps" was a follow-up to the workshops "Assessment of needs and planning to improve the quality management capacity of national/state mine action authorities ", which, was organized by the Norwegian People's Aid, in Sarajevo in December 2022 and in Belgrade, May 2023.

Serbia National Academy for Public Administration

In the period from February 7-9, 2023, as well as November 27-29, 2023, the National Academy for Public Administration, with the financial support of the European Union, aiming at the strengthening of the professional capacities of senior civil servants in the Republic of Serbia, as part of the training program for state authorities executives - the Honeycomb module "Becoming the EU member", organized a Study visit of senior civil servants to institutions of the European Union and diplomatic representations in Brussels. Representatives of SMAC, together with the representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, the Personnel Management Service, the Office for the Fight against Drugs, the Intellectual Property Office, had the opportunity to visit and talk with the representatives of the Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the EU, European Parliament, European Commission/Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations - DG NEAR/European Service for External Affairs - EEAS, Directorate-General for Digital Networks, Content and Technology - DG CNECT, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the EU.

Serbia Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government with the support provided by the EU Project for Public Administration Reform within the Sectoral Reform Agreement - EU4PAR

On February 27 - 28, March 27 - 28, May 9 and 10, 2023, workshops were held aimed to institutionalize the CAF quality management model in the Serbian Mine Action Centre. CAF - Common Assessment Framework is a quality management system for public administration institutions based on which employees and managers assess their own organization, determine their strengths and potential for improvement, and then apply measures toward improvement.

Implementation of IMAS EOD Level 3+ Course in Cooperation Between SMAC and Drakon Group

The ongoing cooperation between the Serbian Mine Action Centre and the UK based company, DRAKON Group, has facilitated the delivery of an IMAS Level 3+, Advanced Explosive Theory Course, between 18 - 29 September 2023.SMAC and DRAKON Group have signed the Memorandum of Understanding regarding Cooperation and this is the first training course, organised jointly, which is being conducted as a result of this formally ratified agreement. DRAKON's training is internationally recognised and conducted in strict compliance with IMAS test and evaluation protocols (T&EPs). All training was delivered by operationally experienced mine action instructors, who teach in accordance with both ISO and adult learning mandates. Theoretical and practical lectures are held in both the classroom and the attached training grounds, within the SMAC Training Centre in Grocka. Among the participants are trainees from Colombia, UK, France, Nepal, Serbia, and South Sudan; representing UNMAS, TDI, FSD and G4S. Upon completion of the course, successful participants will receive internationally recognised certification and will be qualified as IMAS EOD 3+ (Advanced Explosive Theory) operators.

Ebinger

In November 2022, SMAC staff undertook the training in the use of Ebinger magnetometer which was organized by Ebinger company. Trainees were both female and male SMAC staff.

Methodologies for addressing the Article 5 challenge

The following methods have been employed in Serbia to release areas known or suspected to contain mines:

- Manual demining
- Mechanical demining
  Canine demining

In Serbia, an initial survey which includes collection of data and analysis of available documentation on mine emplacement is employed, as well as a non-technical survey which follows after an analysis of previously collected data, conditions in the field, statements by local population, hunters, foresters, people dealing with exploitation of wood, representatives of Civil Protection and Police, amongst others. One significant indicator has been data on accidents that have occurred. Unfortunately, in Serbia there is no systematically and centrally kept database on mine accidents and mine victims.
SMAC and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, War Veterans and Social Affairs Government Working Group will be tasked to respond to these issues in the forthcoming period.

The use of the above methods has enabled the defining of risk area for which the SMAC develops corresponding project tasks to commence demining operations. Critical to this is the cancellation of areas registered as mine suspected areas that through a survey are confirmed not to contain mines (in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards -IMAS).

However, at this time the main reason why Serbia's preference is manual demining are as follows:

-Unregistered mine contaminated areas (groups of mines): The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and have not been planted in specific patterns, which aggravates demining efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.

-Climactic conditions: Most of the remaining suspected mined areas in Serbia are mountainous with challenging terrain and thick vegetation. The fact that these areas have not been accessed since the end of the conflict (2000-2001), due to suspicion of mines, means that the land is unmanaged, making it even less accessible.

Given the above, SMAC believes that most of the above areas are not appropriate for the use of machinery or mine detection dogs.

However, the following methods can be employed in Serbia to release areas suspected to contain mines:

-Non-technical survey
-Technical survey
-Clearance
-Mechanical demining
-Canine demining

The use of targeted and / or systematic technical survey could further support these efforts. The use of machines in suitable areas could be an efficient response to 'nusiance' mines

In Serbia, an initial survey which includes collection of data and analysis of available documentation on mine emplacement is employed, as well as a non - technical survey (NTS), which follows after an analysis of previously collected data, conditions in the field, statements by local population, hunters, foresters, people dealing with exploitation of wood, representatives of Civil Protection and Police, amongst others. One significant indicator has been data on accidents that have occurred.

Non – technical survey determines borders of the suspected area, coordinates of the location, type of mines and other UXO, allocation of land, impact on environment.

Technical survey is employed to additionally collect information by technical methods on a suspected area and in case when the data collected by a non – technical survey are not sufficient for suspected areas to be declared hazardous or safe. Technical survey is done by the combination of several methods - manual detection by metal detectors and visually. Manual detection is conducted in prospections. The scheme and dimensions of a prospection depend on land configuration, and all in accordance with the IMAS.

Clearance is conducted in accordance with the IMAS. It is done by a manual method at the depth of 20 cm. Apart from a manual method, demining machines can be used, as well as dogs.

The size of the area to be cleared is determined on the basis of processed data which have been collected by a non-technical survey.

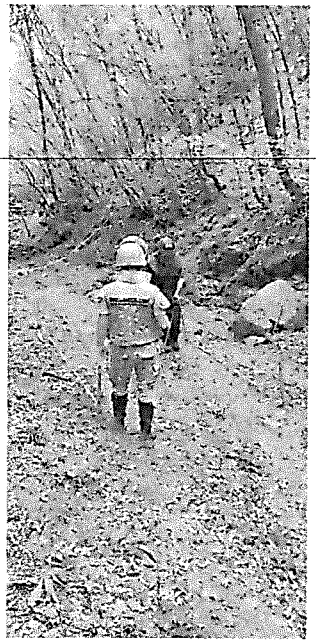
Demining has been conducted in accordance with the IMAS. Search of the terrain on completed projects tasks has been done by a manual method at the depth of 20 cm, of which on several project tasks, apart from a manual method, dogs were used. The productivity per a deminer, depending on mine situation, terrain configuration, land characteristics and vegetation, was up to 150 square metres per a day.

The SMAC as well as its partner operators carry out a number of efforts to ensure the quality of tasks carried out in mine, cluster munitions and other UXO affected areas. The SMAC has conducted quality control operations on all completed demining projects to date. Upon completion of a demining project, the SMAC awards a Certificate of completion indicating that demining operations have been conducted in accordance with the IMAS.
Quality assurance and control is carried out at all levels of operations and could be summarised in the following activities:

- **Execution plan review**: Once an organization has been selected through the tender to carry out clearance in a specific site, it is required that the organization submits an Execution Plan to the SMAC which provides details concerning who will carry out clearance, with what means, protective equipment, in what manner, with what medical team and equipment, how will it organize the site, deadlines of when it intends to begin demining in a specific location, among other issues. Once the SMAC approves the organization's execution plan, it gives permission to the organization to begin work on the task.
- **Ad hoc controls:** During the execution of work, the SMAC conducts ad hoc visits to the site to ensure the proper arrangement and marking of a site, functioning of devises for search of terrain and detection of mines and UXO, whether and how daily records are kept on the performance and progress for each deminer, among other. The SMAC pays special attention to the manner of work of deminers, whether they act in accordance with operation and safety procedures requested by the project documentation.


Introduction into works – check-up of operator's equipment

-Final control: After receiving information from the contractor that the operations on a concrete site have been concluded, the SMAC commences the final control through an analysis of all previous completed controls, documentation on found mines and UXO and their destruction, documentation on executed works etc. Along with the SMAC, the contractor signs minutes with representatives of future land users (most relevant representative of local authorities) by which they confirm that they are familiar with borders of demined areas. The contractor and the SMAC sign minute to handover the site which has been demined in accordance with a concrete project task, which identifies the exact location, project, contractor, period of works, used methods and findings. Finally, the SMAC issues a certificate on completed demining of a concrete location in which, apart from stating relevant data, is stated that demining has been done in accordance with the IMAS, which guarantees clearance of 99.65%.



Quality control on a demining project in Končulj Village (manual method)

Serbian Mine Action Centre develops projects for clearance of the areas which directly affect the local population, such as those close to settlements where local people have abandoned their houses and stopped cultivating land due to fear of landmines/ERW.

Please note that prioritisation of hazardous areas takes place between Serbia, SMAC and donors according to agreed criteria. Serbia access the needs of the population – women, men, boys and girls and based on it, the annual plans are developed.

Efforts undertaken to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas

The whole area suspected to be contaminated with various types of mines has been visibly marked with "STOP UXO" signs in Serbian and Albanian languages, given that it is an area with multi-ethnic population. Areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, have been also marked correspondingly. Marking is conducted by the SMAC and within its regular activities the SMAC periodically visits contaminated locations making sure that these signs remain emplaced.

Suspected Hazardous Area in Ravno Bučje Village, Bujanovac Municipality

- ***Information on changes to reports of new mine victims,*** The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia is designated as the Governmental body in charge of the integration of victims assistance, and undertakes activities aimed at supporting victims. The Department for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the Department for the veterans-disebled Protection were formed as bodies directly responsible for the activity of assisting persons with disabilities.

In line with Action #41 of the Oslo action plan, the state supports the development of services in the field of the Rights of Soldiers, Disabled Veterans, Civilian Disabled Veterans and Family Members, social protection and employment, so that rural areas are included, and with the aim of increasing the availability of services, so that in all units of local self-government in Serbia, there are services for the protection of veterans and the disabled, i.e. services for social protection and employment services, which civil war disabled persons can contact in order to obtain their rights and improve the position of persons with disabilities.

To raise awareness among EO victims on their rights and available services, an active approach is being taken to improve the flow of information at the intersectoral level as well as the relationship between the victim and the competent service. Therefore, stronger coordination is being planned between representatives of associations dealing with EO victims and the Government.

The Republic of Serbia has mine victims in areas under its jurisdiction.

In 2022-2023, there were no demining accidents in the Republic of Serbia.

In line with Action #35 of the Oslo action plan, in accordance with the Law on Rights veterans, war invalids, civilian war invalids and members of theirs family, this Ministry has a database which gathers various information of beneficiaries. According to the database, and according to data from December 2022, the data records include: 630 civilian war invalids, 214 family members of deceased civilian war invalids and family members of civilian war victims, i.e. 122 deceased civilian war invalids, as well as 92 members this family of civilian victims of war. All persons registered were injured by anti-personnel mines or explosive remnants of war.

The Republic of Serbia is making efforts to find donor funds for the creation of a new database or updating the old database, with the aim of improving the records keeping of beneficiaries of rights.

In the period 2022-2023, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, in cooperation with the Serbian Mine Action Centre, with the financial support of Republic of Korea, through ITF Enhancing Human Security, implemented a mine victim assistance project - rehabilitation and medical care.

Representatives of SMAC participated at the Third Global Conference on the Assistance to Victims of AP Mines and other EO in a Disability Rights Context, that took place in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in October 2023.

Information on Risk Education actions taken during the previous request

The following section includes Serbia's efforts to provide Risk education actions during the extension period, including its efforts under Action #28-32 of the Oslo Action Plan.

Pursuant to Article 35 of the Law on Ministries, SMAC conducts expert works in the field of humanitarian demining related, among others, to educating populations of mine/ERW risk.

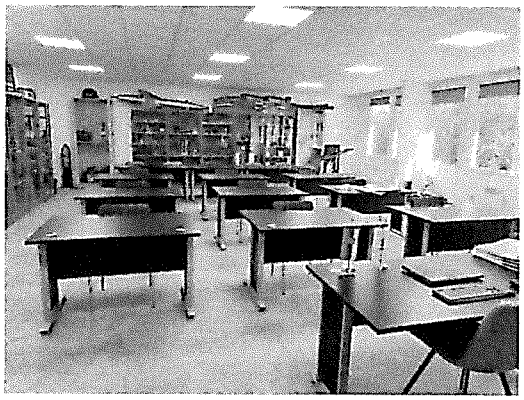
In line with Oslo Action Plan, Action #28, and noting that SMAC is the only institution responsible for conducting training in RE, SMAC has developed its own program for recognizing explosive remnants of war in accordance with IMAS and submitted it to the Ministry of Education for verification, which verified it in March 2021.

In line with Action #31 of the Oslo Action Plan, the purpose of the SMAC training is to build national capacities to educate trainees (members of local self-governments, civil protection, hunters and construction workers engaged in excavation works in the ERW contaminated areas) in the field of mine action and to enable them to improve knowledge and ability to recognize ERW in the Republic of Serbia. In addition to SMAC staff, who will be engaged as trainers, experts from the Ministry of Interior will also be engaged, so that different aspects and training modules, among others, the basics of ERW recognition, international mine action standards, medical aspect, etc. will be covered. In relation to that, the SMAC coordinates activities with local authorities, school authorities and other relevant state bodies (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transport), local media means in communities where demining operations are conducted.

Some of the challenges faced by Serbia is raising awareness with the population on risks and threats of ERW. By organizing Training Courses for Educators (Instructors) for Mine and Explosive Remnants of War Risk Education, SMAC has succeeded in stakeholders (i.e. private companies) recognizing the importance of this issue and the necessity to select their personnel to undergo such training. Mostly, trainees are middle and younger male population due to the type of works that are at risk to encounter ERW. In 2022, 5 courses for stakeholders were held with total of 64 trained personnel. Trainers were SMAC and MoD staff who underwent Training of trainers for conducting explosive ordnance disposal training course level 1 (EOD level 1) and level 2 (EOD Level 2) - the project implemented within the cooperation of SMAC with the Ministry of Defence, and the financial support of the Delegation of the European Union in Belgrade, in 2021.

Based on the Conclusion of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, on July 18, 2023, the Ministry of Defense as the transferor and the Mine Action Centre of the Republic of Serbia as transferee of property, completed handover of the former Military complex "Velika Moštanica", which was included in the Master plan of the Serbian Army.

The "Velika Moštanica" military complex is located in Belgrade and consists of 16 buildings on an area of 3 hectares. It is planned that the military complex with classrooms and premises, as well as training grounds within the complex, among other things, will be used for organizing and conducting EOD training courses and EORE courses in accordance with IMAS standards. Also, the existing buildings and training grounds within the complex provide the opportunity to work on the development and testing
of new technologies and innovations in mine action.



In line with Action #29, local at-risk populations are being informed about demining activities through a number of means and media. Mine risk education was conducted in schools and local communities. In accordance with the IMAS, during demining operations, evacuation of people from houses, shops and other communal locations located within the zone of demining works is conducted. Suspension of traffic on the roads within the zone of demining operations is conducted. Accordingly, given that in Serbia, the areas suspected to be contaminated with mines are located in the Municipality of Bujanovac, which is an area with multi-ethnic population, the whole area has been visibly marked with "Stop Mines" signs in Serbian and Albanian languages. During survey and community liaison activities, women, men and children are consulted. In addition, there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance.

In the forthcoming period, SMAC is planning to conduct MRE project for the newly discovered mine contaminated areas in Bujanovac, which will imply engagement of mixed Serbian and Albanian staff, **given that Bujanovac is comprised of Serbian and Albanian population.**

There have been no new mine victims in the period between the submission of the previous request and the present day.

Nature and extent of the remaining Article 5 challenge: quantitative aspects

As of March 2024, there is 1 area in the Republic of Serbia suspected to contain anti-personnel mines totalling **268,100 square metres remaining to be addressed.** In addition, there are newly identified suspect hazardous areas of that are targeted for survey during 2024-2026.

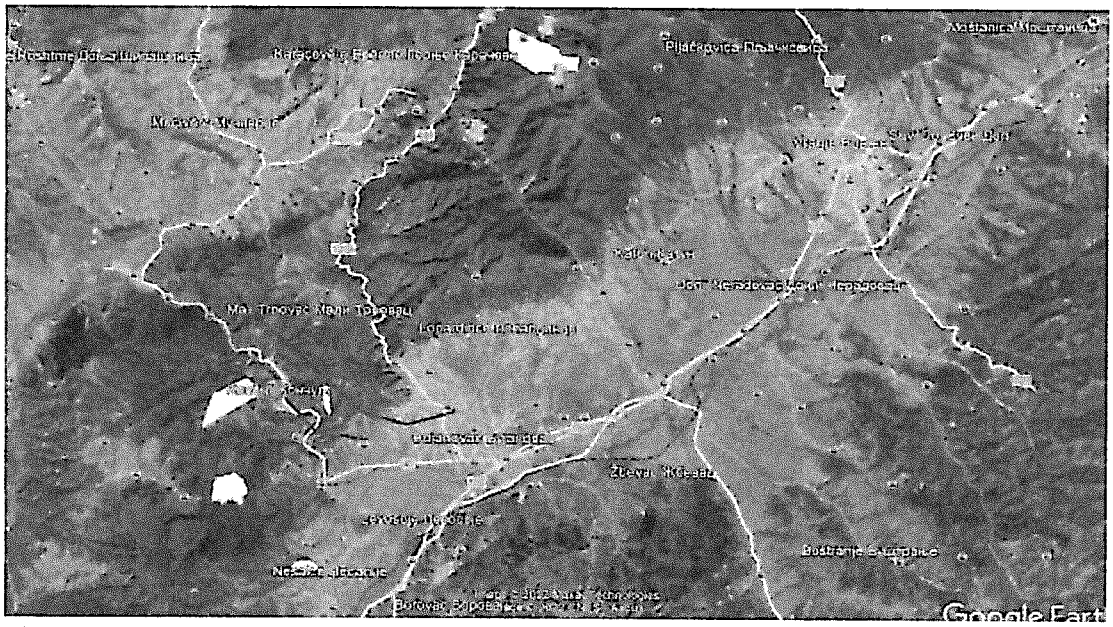
In the period 2-3 October 2019, in the territory of the Municipality of Bujanovac (Village of Đorđevac), at the request of representatives of local self-government, the Mine Action Centre of the Republic of Serbia conducted survey and marking of locations suspected to be contaminated by mines. These are locations where fires occurred in August 2019, and according to eyewitnesses, explosions could be heard in several places after the fire broke out, indicating the existence of explosive ordnance in these areas.

SMAC representatives and Chief of the Emergency Management Staff of the Municipality of Bujanovac, visited the sites and interviewed local residents, local community representatives, firefighters, as well as police and military representatives.

The mine incident questionnaires have been completed in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

Furthermore, suspected hazardous areas have been marked in order to clearly and visually warn of mine danger, as well as to ban the entry of population into mine suspected area. Mine warning signs have been posted in the areas of possible access to mined areas (roads, paths and other areas where movement of people is expected).

Google Map of Bujanovac Municipality with suspected hazardous areas and newly identified suspected hazardous areas (shown in white). ***Please note that these white polygons shown on the map represent a rough illustration of the sites where fire forest broke out and explosions could be heard. No survey has yet taken place.***



The starting areas for non-technical survey that will include all of Bujanovac Municipality are:

- Area of 1,777,367 m^2 - in the area of the village Djordjevac, which borders on the north side with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0240/20 and with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0193-4/17.
- Area of 156,125 m^2 - between the villages of Veliki Trnovac and Končulj, which on the south side borders with the Project "Turijsko brdo 1" 0134/12, and on the north side with the Project "Končulj – Transmission Line 1 and 2", number 0240/21.
- Area of 1,317,575 m^2 - located in the area of the village of Končulj, between the villages Končulj and Dobrosin, which is bordered on the north by the Project "Končulj Singerit" 0209/18.
- Area of 830,383 m^2 - located between the villages of Lučane and Dobrosin, which on the north side borders with the Projects "Dobrosin" 0199/18, "Dobrosin 1" 0245/21, and on the west and east side borders with the Project for Integrated Approach to Mine Risk Land Release 0179/15.
- Area of 286,193 m^2 in the village of Nesalce, located west of the Nesalce village, on the local road to the village of Vrban.

NTS Team will work in 6 areas and MRE activities will be conduct in all villages of the Bujanovac Municipality, and if during MRE activities, additional indicators are found, the NTS will be extended to these areas as well.

Areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines remain in 1 village in the Municipality of Bujanovac as follows:

Table: Summary of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of March 2024							
Municipality	**Village**	**Number of areas known to contain antipersonnel mines**	**Number of areas suspected to contain antipersonnel mines**	**Total number of areas known or suspected to contain antipersonnel mines**	**Amount of area known to contain antipersonnel mines(square metres)**	**Amount of area suspected to contain antipersonnel mines(square metres)**	**Total amount of area known or suspected to contain antipersonnel mines(square metres)**
Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje	/	1	1	/	268,100	268,100
Bujanovac	**Đorđevac, Veliki Trnovac, Končulj, Lučani, Dobrosin, Nesalce**	/	5	5	/	/	4,467,643
Total	**7**	/	**6**	**6**	/	**268,100**	**4,735,743**

Other Contamination

As of March 2024, there are 2 municipalities in the Republic of Serbia suspected to contain cluster munitions totalling 610,137 square metres. The areas suspected to contain cluster munitions are as follows:

Table: Summary of areas known or suspected to contain cluster munitions as of March 2024							
Municipality	**Village**	**Number of areas known to contain cluster munitions**	**Number of areas suspected to contain cluster munitions**	**Total number of areas known or suspected to contain cluster munitions**	**Amount of area known to contain cluster munitions (square metres)**	**Amount of area suspected to contain cluster munitions (square metres)**	**Total amount of area known or suspected to contain cluster munitions (square metres)**
Užice	Bioska	/	1	1	/	584,567	584,567
Bujanovac	Borovac	1	/	1	25,570	/	281,169
Total	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**25,570**	**610,137**	**610,137**

Nature and extent of the remaining Article 5 challenge: qualitative aspects

The remaining contamination by mines is located on mostly hilly and mountainous terrain. These groups of mines have been emplaced without being registered and without a specific pattern.

Mine action operations will also face challenges due to the fact that operations cannot be carried out throughout the whole year, but only when weather conditions permit it, namely in accordance with the IMAS, the temperature for demining works to be carried out needs to be over $5C^0$, and in case of Serbia it is the period March – early December.

Furthermore, most of the suspected area is not appropriate for the use of mine detection dogs or machinery.

Suspected Hazardous Area in Ravno Bučje Village, Bujanovac Municipality

The remaining contamination by mines is located on mostly hilly and mountainous terrain, with a slope of 5 to 10%, and on several places of up to 40%. Access to most of contaminated sites is aggravated due to poor macadam roads, particularly in the rain period.

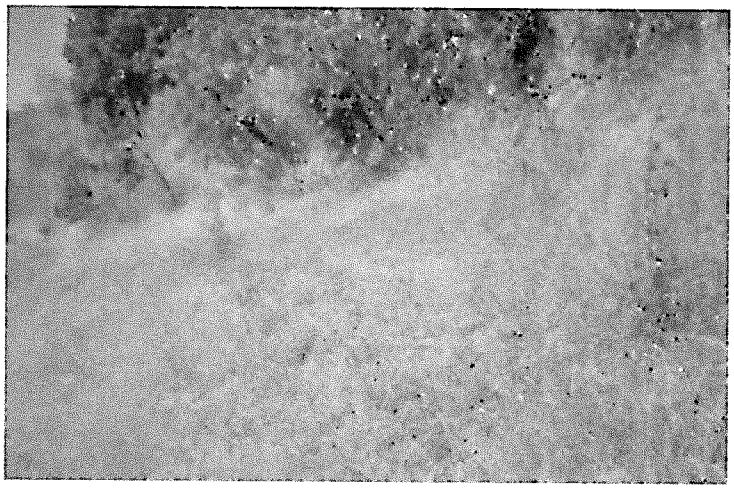
This terrain/land is of an utmost importance to the population of nearby villages from the aspect of cattle breeding, exploitation of woods, mushroom picking, and tobacco production. Additionally, suspected mined areas are in an immediate vicinity of settlements, thus posing a constant threat to safety of local population.

Mine action operations will also face challenges due to the fact that operations cannot be carried out throughout the whole year, but only when weather conditions permit it, namely in accordance with the IMAS, the temperature for demining works to be carried out needs to be over $5C^0$, and in case of Serbia it is the period March – early December.

Serbia is putting all its efforts to effectively use this favorable time during the year, but very often the timeline completion depends on the availability of donor funds.
Funds that the Government of Serbia allocates for demining operations in Bujanovac are used exclusively for these operations.

SMAC, as a national mine action coordinating authority has requested from the Serbian Government to continue to allocate funds in the years to follow. Despite the economic and overall situation, the Serbian Government has taken ownership of the problem, by continuous allocating of funds for demining operations. However, international support is needed in order to solve the overall mine clearance problem.

Suspected Hazardous Area in Ravno Bučje Village, Bujanovac Municipality



Newly identified suspected hazardous area in Nesalce

Circumstances that impeded implementation during previous extension period

There are a number of circumstances that present challenges for Serbia in complying with its Article 5 deadline. Particular issues faced by Serbia are as follows:

-**Unregistered mine contaminated areas (groups of mines):** The remaining areas contaminated by mines do not have registries and have not been planted in specific patterns, which aggravates demining efforts, namely survey results are subject to alterations.

-**Newly discovered mine suspected areas in Bujanovac, in October 2019 and in August 2021.** However, the data on the scope of the contamination of the newly discovered areas are not available at the time of writing this update.

-**Climactic conditions:** Contaminated areas are inaccessible during some periods of the year causing operation delays.

-**Contamination other than mines**: Specificity and complexity of the problem presents the fact that apart from mines still remaining in the territory of Serbia, Serbia also encounters with numerous challenges related to clearance of the areas contaminated with unexploded cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, as well as residual contamination and clearance operations triggered by infrastructure development projects.

- **Pending of implementation of non-technical survey project** of Bujanovac municipality for which

Serbia requested previous extension request in order to gather necessary information to design a work plan and project with greater certainty the amount of areas, the size of each area and the amount of time matched with a detail budget that will be required to complete Serbia's Article 5 obligations. A contractor has been selected and the project was expected to commence in 2023, however, due to certain security concerns, relevant Serbian authorities estimated that the commencement of the field operations should be delayed.

Efforts to mitigate climatic conditions and other circumstances that can impede progress

As indicated operations cannot be carried out throughout the whole year, but only when weather conditions permit it, namely in accordance with the IMAS, the temperature for demining works to be carried out needs to be over 5C0, and in case of Serbia it is the period March – early December.
Serbia is putting all its efforts to effectively use this favourable time during the year, but very often the timeline completion depends on the availability of donor funds.

Funds that the Government of Serbia allocates for demining operations in Bujanovac are used exclusively for these operations.

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Humanitarian, economic, social and environmental implications of remaining mined areas

The remaining mine contamination presents a severe socioeconomic impact on the municipality of Bujanovac. Municipality of Bujanovac, where the remaining contamination by mines is located, is characterized by population of mixed national background (Serbs, Albanians, Roma, etc.). It is one of the most underdeveloped municipalities in Serbia. The territory of the Municipality covers the area of 461 km^2. There are 43 302 inhabitants, namely 94 inhabitants per km^2. Since the remaining contamination by mines is located on mostly hilly and mountainous terrain which is of an utmost importance to the population of nearby villages from the aspect of cattle breeding, exploitation of woods, mushroom picking, and tobacco production, suspected hazardous areas being in an immediate vicinity of settlements pose a constant threat to safety of local population.

Since exploitation of woods, development of cattle breeding and mushroom picking, happen to be the main source of income of locals, presence of mines additionally impoverish them. In addition, road communications are blocked, environment affected, and fire risks increased.

Presence of mines prevents construction of solar plants, primary tobacco processing facilities, etc, as well as the development of the region through an increased flow of people, goods, services and opening of new work positions. Demining would prevent trend of locals moving out from this region, which, in the past years, have been massively moving to either bigger towns or cities in Serbia, or in Western Europe countries.

-**Lack of funds**: Funding from donors for mine action activities have severely diminished through the years, with donors preference to provide funds for cluster munitions clearance.

III. The Remaining Challenge

1. Amount of time being requested

Serbia requests a 2-year extension period to 31 December 2026.

2. Rationale for the time requested

As of March 2024, in the Republic of Serbia there is 1 area suspected to anti-personnel mines estimated to measure 268,100 square metres in the Municipality of Bujanovac, **plus newly discovered mine suspected areas of an unknown size that will be surveyed during the period of the request in the Bujanovac Municipality.**

The Republic of Serbia will put maximum effort into clearing known areas totalling 268,100 square metres in 2024. National and international funds for 2024 clearance operations have been secured.

During the period of the request, Serbia is projecting that it will need 18 months to recruit survey teams, complete non-technical survey and analyse all data in order to develop a forward-looking work plan. Serbia will aim to submit by 31 March 2026 a request, including a work plan for completing its Article 5 obligations.
Assumptions

If the funds for demining operations are provided, namely if international funding is made available for clearance of anti-personnel mines, national funding continues to flow for the implementation of the programme and no additional mine areas are discovered ahead of completion. Serbia intends, by the use of methods such as cancelation and reduction through non-technical and technical survey, manual demining, mechanical demining (where applicable) to complete clearance in Serbia well before their deadline in the situation when security concerns do not continue to impact on the access and deployment of survey teams to the areas.

IV. Detail work plan for the period of the requested extension

1. Institutional, human resource and material capacity available to implement the work plan

The SMAC is a state authority in charge of coordination and managing of projects in the field of humanitarian demining. It employs 12 clerks.

The SMAC does not directly conduct demining.

Demining operations in accordance with the SMAC project tasks and IMAS conduct and will conduct specialized companies and other organizations registered under the Ministry of the Interior to carry out such works, and which are technically equipped and employ adequate staff, and as such accredited by the Ministry of Interior – Sector for Emergency Management.

As of 1 January 2014, according to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior is responsible for accrediting demining operators.

The Ministry of Interior issues accreditations. In 2023, valid accreditation was processed for 11 companies/organizations – 6 from Serbia, and 5 from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Depending on the type of contamination (mine, cluster munitions, other ERW), land configuration and soil mineralization, the number of survey and clearance teams ranges from 1 to 4, with 8 to 40 deminers.

When it comes to deployment of teams in response to mine contamination in Bujanovac Municipality, the number of teams ranges from 1 to 4, (depending of Contractor's capacity) plus 2 MDD teams, up to 28 deminers and daily productivity per deminer of 150 m^2 and per MDD of 1500 m2.

Tender procedures for the selection of contractors for implementation of humanitarian demining projects funded from international donations through the ITF conducts the ITF.

Selection of contractors for demining operations that are funded in other manner conducts an investor.

Namely, if and when the funds are provided, commercial companies and/or non -governmental organizations accredited by the relevant Serbian authorities, which will be selected on public tenders for selection of contractors, will carry out demining operations in accordance with the project and QA and QC of the SMAC, which will issue a clearance completion certificate.

Destruction of mines and other unexploded ordnance in Serbia is done by the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia.

Most of the remaining suspected mined areas in Serbia are mountainous with challenging terrain and thick vegetation. Access roads to these areas are often inaccessible, and prior to the commencement of demining operations, Serbian armed forces will be using their machines and vehicles (excavators, trucks) improve the quality of access roads by making them clear of obstacles and able to be travelled on.

2. Financial / Institutional Capacities

Since 2015, the funds for demining operations have been allocated from the Serbian State Budget and this trend has been continued on an annual basis and we expect the Serbian Government to continue to allocate the funds for demining operations in the future.

In 2024, the Serbian Government allocated around 260.000 EUR for demining operations and we expect the funds for demining operations to be allocated by the Serbian Government throughout the requested extension period, too. This proves Serbia's strong commitment to full implementation of the Ottawa Convention. We are aware that the national funds are not sufficient to completely resolve the mine problem, therefore, at the same time, we urge donors to support our efforts throughout the requested extension period by providing substantial funds for demining operations.

Please note that at the time of writing this draft, we do not have confirmation by potential donors of the funds available for Serbia in the period to follow, either for mine clearance or cluster munitions clearance.

In addition to funds from national budget (780,000 EUR), we estimate that we would need around 1,500,000 EUR secured by international donors.

Price of demining of 1square metres of mine contaminated area ranges from 0.8 to 1.3 EUR depending on land characteristics and terrain configuration. Please note that the prices are the matter of the market, namely the SMAC cannot influence the prices the bidders offer at tenders.

The funds from the Serbian State Budget will be provided to support the on-going work of the SMAC – salaries of the staff, running costs (electricity, water, heating), office and consumption material costs, fuel costs, maintenance of vehicles, costs of the SMAC staff insurance – as well as survey activities, development of adequate project tasks for demining/clearance of locations confirmed to be contaminated by mines, cluster munitions and other UXO, follow-up of the implementation of project tasks and conduct of demining quality assurance and quality control.

In addition to funds to deal with mine contamination, Serbia also needs funds to address the contamination related to unexploded cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO. We estimate that in the forthcoming 2-year period we will need additional 20 million EUR to clear these areas.

In addition to approaching potential donors, SMAC will continue to raise awareness of the funding problem lobbying with state authorities, public enterprises and local authorities to fund clearance from contaminated areas for which they are directly interested.

3. Detailed Work Plan: Qualitative information

In 2024, demining operations are planned to be conducted for the projects developed by the SMAC totalling 390,300 square metres. Demining will contribute to an increase of safety of local population, return to their homes and provide possibilities for safe exploitation of forest, cattle grazing and picking of mushrooms, which are one of main sources of an income of local population.

Serbian Government allocated 260,000 EUR for demining operations in 2024. At the time of writing this document, only national funds are available for these project tasks. SMAC intends to match the national funds through ITF Enhancing Human Security.

For one project area, technical survey will be used. It is conducted on the basis of an analysis land release, after data analysis and information collected by previously conducted general survey with a primary goal:

-verification of accuracy and authenticity of documents, data and information on mines and UXO contamination in cases when the general survey methods could not confirm accuracy and authenticity of stated documents, data and information. Namely, it will include analysis of data collected during previously surveys, conditions in the field, statements by local population, hunters, foresters, and people dealing with exploitation of wood, representatives of Civil Protection and Police, amongst others. One significant indicator has been data on accidents that have occurred.

The use of the above methods will enable the defining of risk area for which the SMAC has developed corresponding clearance project tasks. Critical to this is the cancellation of areas registered as mine suspected areas that through survey are confirmed not to contain mines (in accordance with the IMAS).

For newly identified suspect hazardous areas discovered in 2019 and 2021 during forest fires, mine assessment needs to be done, namely non - technical survey – the use of all non-technical means, including desk assessments, analysis of available data and a wide range of other information gathering and analysis functions, as well as physical visits to field locations. These elements will contribute to identifying, accessing, collecting, reporting and using information to help define where mines and ERW are to be found, as well as where they are not, and to support land cancellation, reduction and clearance decision making processes.

SMAC has tentatively provided donor funds to start a non-technical survey project, that will include 2 mixed survey teams (1 Serbian and 1 Albanian team of 2 surveyors each), which will be fully trained and equipped to conduct required tasks. These activities will be supervised and monitored by SMAC and in cooperation with the local authorities.

The project will take up to 1 year from the moment of signing the contract with an international instructor and purchase of equipment and focus on the 6 areas identified below where fire forests occurred and explosions could be heard, but if during MRE activities, which will be conducted in all 59 villages of the Bujanovac Municipality, the existence of other mine indicators might be reported, NTS will also include all those reported areas in Bujanovac. During this period, technical survey projects will be developed, as well as land release projects for the assessed areas.

The starting areas for non-technical survey that will include all of Bujanovac Municipality are:

- Area of 1,777,367 m^2 - in the area of the village Djordjevac, which borders on the north side with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0240/20 and with the Project for technical survey of the "Bujanovac North" site, number 0193-4/17.

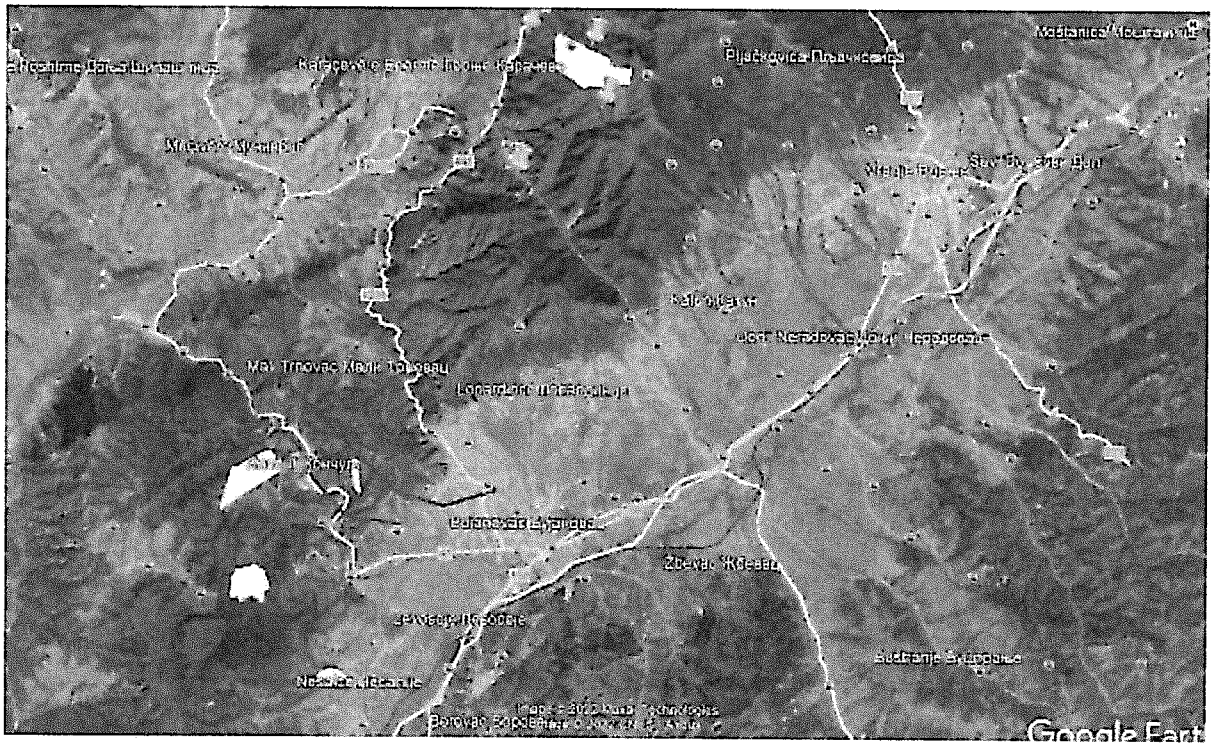
• Area of 156,125 m^2 - between the villages of Veliki Trnovac and Končulj, which on the south side borders with the Project "Turijsko brdo 1" 0134/12, and on the north side with the Project "Končulj – Transmission Line 1 and 2", number 0240/21.

• Area of 1,317,575 m^2 - located in the area of the village of Končulj, between the villages Končulj and Dobrosin, which is bordered on the north by the Project "Končulj Singerit" 0209/18.

• Area of 830,383 m^2 - located between the villages of Lučane and Dobrosin, which on the north side borders with the Projects "Dobrosin" 0199/18, "Dobrosin 1" 0245/21, and on the west and east side borders with the Project for Integrated Approach to Mine Risk Land Release 0179/15.

• Area of 286,193 m^2 in the village of Nesalce, located west of the Nesalce village, on the local road to the village of Vrban.

Google Map of Bujanovac Municipality with suspected hazardous areas and newly identified suspected hazardous areas (shown in white). ***Please note that these white polygons shown on the map represent a rough illustration of the sites where fire forest broke out and explosions could be heard. No survey has yet taken place.***



Framework of project implementation

Expected project implementation time	Activities / expected results of project implementation	Affected population and survey area
18 months	• Identification of contaminated and hazardous areas through survey activities, development of new and updating of existing projects (Technical survey, demining, ERW clearance, permanent marking, education of the population on the ERW risk) • Assessment of the impact of mines and ERW on affected target groups of the population; • Identified suspected/confirmed contaminated area and safe for further use/canceled area; • Identified suspected/confirmed contaminated area marked in Serbian and Albanian; • The size of the area where the survey was conducted; • Interviews with members of affected communities conducted; • Messages of safe and risk behavior with mines and other ERW conveyed to the population; • Based on the collected data, projects were developed for technical survey, demining or ERW clearance by the SMAC.	• The municipality comprises an area of 4.61 km^2 • 38,300 inhabitants • 59 villages • 30 local communities • Starting areas for non-technical survey - 4,367,643 m^2

Detailed Plan for Non-Technical Survey

Activity	Comment	Month (2024/2025																		
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct
Finalizing procedures with ITF and procurement of equipment		x																		
Recruitment	It is planned to recruit minimum 4 surveyors + 1 operational manager	x	x																	
Training of trainers	SMAC personnel will be trained by international instructor		X	x																
Training of survey teams	SMAC personnel under supervision of interantional instructor will train survey teams				x	x														
Desktop Survey	First step - SMAC staff with surveyors					X	X													
Deployment						X	X													
Area of 1.777.367m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**						x	x												
Area of 1.317.575m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**							x	x											
Area of 830.383m2	**Engaged 4 surveyors**								x	X										
Area of 286.193m2	**Engaged 2 surveyors**									x	x									

Area of 156.125m2	**Engaged 2 surveyors**									x	x									
Survey of additional areas discovered during NTS												x	x							
SMAC Analysis of survey results	**At the end of each month and final analysis**					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Periodical analysis by Project supervisor							x			x			x							
Final analysis by international instructor or Project supervisor															x	x	X			
Development of technical survey & clearance workplan																		x	X	x

Estimated size of the areas to be surveyed and an estimation of the area that may be subject to technical survey, and clearance.

Total NTS area 4,367,643 m^2	Non -Technical Survey	2,367,643 m^2 cancelled
	Technical survey	1,500,000 m^2 reduced
	Clearance	500,000 m^2 cleared

Upon completion of this project, SMAC will have a clear picture of the contamination, which means that Serbia will have a work plan for clearance operations and consequently complete their Article 5 obligations.

Demining operations in the period of the requested extension will follow upon securing of funding from donors or other sources of funding.

Namely, if and when the funds are provided, commercial companies and/or non - governmental organizations accredited by the SMAC, which will be selected on public tenders for selection of contractors, will carry out demining works on defined risk areas, in accordance with the project tasks, and QA and QC of the SMAC.

Priority will be to demine those areas which directly affect the local population.

However, sometimes donors themselves, depending on availability and amount of their funds, influence the choice of the areas which will be demined first.

In the forthcoming period during a survey, demining, QA and QC the IMAS will be applied.

Demining will be conducted primarily by manual method.

As it was previously mentioned, most of the suspected area is not appropriate for the use of mine detection dogs or machinery. Serbia preference is manual demining, nevertheless, Serbia is willing to conduct technical survey, where appropriate.

Despite the difficult economic situation in the country and modest funds from the National Budget, we will endeavor to secure funding of demining either by submitting projects to ITF applying for their funding, or lobbying with other foreign donors to provide funds for implementation of projects. The dynamics of implementation of our demining projects is affected by provision of funds, that is if the funds for implementation of our projects are not provided, our plan will be directly affected and hard to achieve. On the other hand, if more funds are provided, the work plan could be implemented in shorter period.

At the same time, Serbia has to deal with clearance of areas contaminated with cluster munitions, air bombs – rockets and other UXO, since they also block substantial resources and hinder implementation of development and infrastructure projects. For the implementation of these clearance operations, significant funds are also required.

Demining milestones:

The area of 268,100 square metres plus newly identified suspect hazardous areas will be land released as follows:

2024: An area of 268,100 square metres, which will include:

- Municipality of Bujanovac, Village of Ravno Bučje;

2024-2025: Survey of Bujanovac Municipality

2026: Development of technical survey and clearance workplan

Addressing mined areas in the Municipality of Bujanovac (2024-2026)

Year	Municipality	Village	Estimated mine suspected area to be subject to technical survey/clearance (square metres)	Source of funding and Amount*
2024	Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje, Đorđevac, Dobrosin, Končulj	268,100	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF (500,000 EUR)
2025		Lučani, Veliki Trnovac, Nesalce	Subject to survey and assessment	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding (500,000 EUR)
2026		Development of Technical Survey and clearance workplan	Subject to survey and assessment	National Budget (260,000 EUR) and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding (500,000 EUR)
	Total		**268,100 + newly identified mine contaminated areas**	**780,000 EUR +** and international donations matched through ITF or other sources of funding **1,500,000 EUR**

Regarding NTS, the funds have been secured for 2024 and 2025.

Cluster Munitions Clearance and UXO Clearance (2024-2026)

Year	Municipality	Estimated mine suspected area to be subject to technical survey/clearance (square metres)	Source of funding and Amount*
2024	Užice	584,567	International donations or other sources of funding*
	Bujanovac	25,570	
	Kraljevo	1,806,803	
	Vranje	2,350,000	
2025	Leskovac	1,668,134	International donations or other sources of funding
	Novi Pazar	363,208	
	Vranje	2,400,000	
	Paraćin	2,630,000	
2026	Kraljevo	2,449,166	International donations or other sources of funding
	Rakovica	1,818,525	
	Kragujevac	592,400	
	Vranje	2,233,444	
	Total	**18,921,817**	**International donations or other sources of funding around 20,000,000 EUR**

*Please note that at the time of writing this document, we do not have confirmation by potential donors of the funds secured in the period to follow.

Work plan for mine risk education

Mine risk education activities will be conducted in Bujanovac schools in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The target group is the most vulnerable population of all ethnicity Serbian, Albanian, Roma - children, girls and boys, but also women and men. The mine risk education will be carried out by SMAC and non-technical survey teams. Financial resources are covered by non-technical survey project developed by SMAC.

SMAC is planning to conduct MRE project for the newly discovered mine contaminated areas in Bujanovac, which will be a huge employment opportunity for both women and men.

Table that shows initial plan for MRE activities in schools and local communities in Bujanovac municipality													
Primary School	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**July**	**Aug**	**Aug**
Branko Radičević	x												
Naim Frašeri		x											
Ali Bektaši			x										
Bora Stanković				x									
Miđeni					x								
Sami Frašeri						x							
Vuk Stefanović Karadžić							x						
Desanka Maksimović								x					
Dragomir Trajković									x				
Muarem Kadriju										x			
School for music											x		
High school													
Sveti Sava												x	
30 Local communities - by 3 each month													
Analysis by SMAC team	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Periodic analysis by International instructor	X			X			x						
Final analysis by international instructor or Project supervisor													x

Students in primary and high schools will be divided in 3 age groups, girls and boys, by:

- age 7-10;
- age 11-14;
- age 15-18;

First school to begin with will be "Branko Radičević" - as primary school with the most pupils - over 1.400 pupils with 4 separate classes.

The first task of the surveyors will be to collect precise data on the exact number of pupils, the school's working hours, separate classes, and other important information, taking into account that the surveyors will be working with girls and boys in an environment that is culturally sensitive.

After collecting these information more detailed plan about MRE activities by schools and age groups will be developed;

Bujanovac has 30 local communities, in which surveyors will also conduct MRE activities including age group: 19 - 65, woman and man. By conducting MRE activities in local communities surveyors must aapply appropriate methods, when working with man and woman in an environment that is culturally sensitive.

First local communities to begin with MRE activities will be Đorđevac, Končulj and Dobrosin, as communities with the largest starting areas for non-technical survey, thus the communities which are potentially the most vulnerable to mines and other UXO.

By conducting MRE activities surveyors will be collecting information about potential contamination of mines and other UXO.