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

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Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5

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

Executive Summary

Submitted by Somalia

1. Somalia acceded to the Convention on 16 April 2012 and the Convention entered into force for Somalia on 1 October 2012. Since entry into force, Somalia has committed to implementing its Article 5 mine clearance obligations under the Convention. While significant progress in implementation has been achieved, due to several challenges Somalia has been unable to achieve completion by its original Article 5 deadline of 1 October 2022. In response, this extension request highlights achievements made during Somalia's original ten-year deadline, as well as those circumstances that have impeded progress. The request proposes an extension of Somalia's deadline for five years, including a forward looking detailed and costed multi-year work plan for capacity building, land release and mine risk education activities for the period of the requested extension, 1 October 2022- 1 October 2027.
2. The history of armed conflict in Somalia dates back to the Ethiopian-Somali wars of 1964, and 1977–1978. Since this period, Somalia has witnessed repeated conflict in five Federal State Administrations and Somaliland¹. As a result of repeated conflicts Somalia is contaminated with anti-personnel mines (APM) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). APM / ERW contamination is known to exist along Somalia's border regions with Ethiopia and within Somalia around towns, military installations, often within distance of civilian infrastructure. A baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been difficult to establish with limited accessibility to mined areas during periods of conflict.
3. Somalia's efforts to respond to the complex contamination present in the country includes actions taken before entry into force of the Convention (1 October 2012). The establishment of State based Mine Action Centres was undertaken with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during 1999-2007 and, since 2008, with the support of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). On 4 December 2011, Somalia established the Somalia National Mine Action Authority (SNMAA). In August 2013,

¹ One artefact of the Somali conflict of 1991 is the state of Somaliland. The State of Somaliland remains part of Somalia de jure and is therefore under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). However due to the current situation regarding control, Somalia is unable to plan, coordinate or conduct survey and clearance operations in Somaliland and will focus its activities on the remaining states of Somalia. The FGS will keep this situation under review and will report any change in its Article 7 reports.



the Somalia Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) was established by Presidential decree under the Ministry of Internal Security, replacing the SNMAA2. SEMA was afforded an office at Federal level, and five (5) State based offices in Puntland, Jubaland, South West State, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle.

4. Early efforts to quantify anti-personnel landmine contamination in the country include two landmine impact surveys (LIS) conducted in three phases during the period 2002-2008, in the States of Somaliland and Puntland, at the time the South-Central part of the country was not included in the survey. As a result of these surveys over 1,300 hazard areas, including all types of explosive ordnance, were identified. In 2008, localised surveys began to estimate the level of contamination in Bakool and Bay regions of South West State and Hiran region of Hirshabelle State. These surveys reported one in ten communities surveyed to be contaminated by APM and/or ERW. During this time, contaminated areas were also reported along the border with Ethiopia, in Galguduud and Gedo regions.

5. Due to the ongoing nature of conflict, survey efforts were constrained to specific geographical areas with the nature and extent of the original Article 5 challenge difficult to quantify. The overall extent of APM contamination remains largely unknown and complex, including recontamination of previously cleared areas, accessible stockpiles of weapons and ammunition and the reported use of improvised explosive devices (IED) by non-state armed groups.

6. While the current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the efforts of all operators, the capacity of the Somalia Government and implementing partners to adapt and adopt changes to external shocks reveals the overall cooperation present in the programme. The following factors were identified as significant circumstances that impeded Somalia's progress in achieving its mine action obligations within its initial 10-year period:

- i. Insufficient information about the extent of the contamination
- ii. Insufficient information about the impact of the contamination
- iii. Limited access to contaminated areas because of security concerns
- iv. Other types of contamination (such as IED) have had to take priority
- v. Lack of training
- vi. Lack of resources
- vii. Lack of effective coordination and prioritization

7. Armed conflict in Somalia has impacted all major economic activities. Subsequently, the impact of explosive ordnance (EO), including APM has restricted access to land and other resources, limiting economic opportunities for affected communities. The APM have particularly egregious effects on the rural poor who may have little choice in using contaminated land, posing a risk of potential loss of life, serious injury and/or disability, in the face of other shocks or stresses. The presence of explosive hazards directly impacts the safety of affected communities, including returnees and internally displaced people.

8. As of 31 December 2020, the known remaining challenge in Somalia for all explosive devices of 161, 806, 388 square metres including AP, anti-tank (AT), unexploded ordnance (UXO), abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) contamination in Galmudug, Hirshabelle and Southwest States. Contamination data gathered through historical surveys are considered outdated with more recent conflict resulting in recontamination of some areas. Database clean-up efforts have been undertaken to remove "closed" hazardous areas from the database. At this time, due to a lack of resources to deploy sufficient survey teams and lack of access to areas due to ongoing security concerns, a more detailed estimate of mine contamination is not able to be made in Somalia.

9. Somalia is requesting a five-year extension of its deadline under Article of the Convention, 1 October 2022 – 1 October 2027.

² Decree 107, dated 6 Aug 2013

10. The rationale for the period requested is based on several factors, including the current level of insecurity present in the country that limits access to contaminated areas and the current human, financial and technical resources available to implement Somalia's obligations under Article 5. It must be noted that, as the security situation in Somalia is volatile and constantly changing, an adaptable approach to work plan prioritization must be retained.

11. The work plan aims to continue national capacity building efforts of SEMA to build greater coordination while also continuing work with stakeholders to ensure lifesaving mine action activities in accessible areas are implemented. The 2019 Oslo Action Plan (OAP) outlines best practices on the implementation of survey, clearance and mine risk education activities, together with indicators for measuring progress. In formulating the work plan Somalia has considered key elements of the OAP, including Actions #23 and #24. Somalia recognises the value of the United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes³ in developing an inclusive gender policy for mine action. This policy will be developed as part of Phase One of Somalia's work plan. A two-phase approach will be adopted to implement activities: Phase 1. Present - 1 October 2022, Phase 2. 1 October 2022 – 1 October 2027. Both phases will include the following two components; 1) Building the national capacity of SEMA, 2) Continued implementation of land release and mine risk education activities in secure areas.

Phase 1 – Present time to 1 October 2022

12. Component 1: Building the national capacity of SEMA: Component one includes three objectives together with detailed activities and an estimated timeline for completion, as given in the detailed narrative (page 51 of the request).

13. Component 2: Continued implementation of land release and mine risk education (MRE) activities in secure areas: Component 2 seeks to equip SEMA and the Somalia Mine Action Programme with the capacity building support and partnerships to ensure the continuation of land release and mine risk education activities in secure areas. Component two is comprised of the following two activities:

- i. Development of non-technical survey plan for secure areas: SEMA is cooperating with UNDP and one implementing partner (to be confirmed), to launch a 12-month capacity building project in 2021. The project will initiate a pilot non-technical survey in the fourth quarter of 2021. This pilot is aimed to build SEMA's capacity to undertake a nationwide non-technical survey in Phase Two. The support aims to build administrative capacity in SEMA to improve their administrative functioning, including supporting one existing staff position in SEMA to enable the implementation of the programme.
- ii. Continuation of Land Release and MRE activities in secure areas: SEMA will continue to work with implementing partners to ensure land release activities are implemented in secure areas throughout Phase One. SEMA will also work to ensure that MRE is carried out in communities targeted for land release and other at-risk groups as identified by SEMA and humanitarian partners in coordination with land release operations. This component is comprised of 2 activities, i) Deployment of implementing partners to undertake land release activities in secure areas, ii) Deployment of implementing partners to undertake Mine Risk Education activities.

³ 3rd Edition (2019). See https://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf.

Phase 2 - 1 October 2022 – 1 October 2027

14. The second phase of this work plan covers the period 1 October 2022 – 1 October 2027 of the extension period. In terms of capacity building, this phase will bring greater focus to information management and quality assurance initiated in Phase One. With regard to the implementation of non-technical survey in currently accessible areas based on the timing and outcome of the non-technical survey (NTS) pilot undertaken in Phase One. It is expected that SEMA's capacity will be built to coordinate a nationwide NTS in Phase Two (with consideration given to security and access to mined areas). This phase will also continue lifesaving land release and MRE activities.

15. Somalia currently has 7 international agencies supporting the implementation of its mine action Programme, Danish Demining Group (DDG), The HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), UNMAS, Ukrobnoservis (UOS), and UNDP) as well as national consortia. While the current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the efforts of all operators, the capacity of the Somalia Government and implementing partners to adapt and adopt changes to external shocks, reveals the overall cooperation present in the programme.

16. At the moment, SEMA is heavily reliant on international financial resources. A budget proposal for SEMA has been submitted to the Ministry of Internal Security (MOIS). It is hoped that formal approval of SEMA together with allocations from the State budget will improve to facilitate future contributions of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), as well as leverage international support to SEMA. In the meantime, SEMA is currently working with stakeholders on a national capacity building plan.

17. During Phase One, a detailed budget and a resource mobilisation strategy will be produced for Phase Two of the work plan. SEMA plans to develop a national plan for resources mobilization in collaboration with mine action stakeholders in Somalia, the government and donor countries with a more detailed and costed operational work plan, including desktop survey and non-technical survey provided for Phase Two of the work plan. Somalia intends to keep States Parties apprised of its progress, with the updated work plan submitted as part of Somalia's Article 7 transparency report by 30 April 2023. At the present time until 1 October 2022, the estimated annual cost for implementing the current work plan is estimated to be US \$6,400,000 per year. This includes:

- i. SEMA operations at Federal and State levels (5 Offices): US \$900,000 per year
- ii. United Nations agency support to Article Five compliance: US \$500,000 per year
- iii. Implementation of projected land release activities⁴: US \$5,000,000 per year

18. The following assumptions and risks are made regarding the realisation of the plan:

- i. Security: Somalia is beset by a number of security challenges. This work plan assumes the security situation will remain stable in order to carry out non-technical survey in all currently accessible locations with the scope to increase the number of locations for survey when the security situation improves. Somalia will continue to keep the States Parties apprised of its progress in implementing its work plan under Article 5 on an annual basis through its Article 7 reports and at Meetings of the States Parties.
- ii. Productivity: Somalia will support innovation in mine action that can improve efficiency and effectiveness of land release methodologies in accordance with OAP Action #27.
- iii. Funding: Current capacity building and land release is funded by external donors through SEMA's implementing partners. Significant reduction in funding will have an overall impact on coordination and productivity.

⁴ Please note: All mine action organisations operating in Somalia will incorporate explosive ordnance risk education interventions into the respective projects.

19. Vast locations of Somalia remain vulnerable to the persisting threat from anti-government elements, and the sporadic inter-clan conflict in some parts of the country. This limits the ease and safe access of mine action teams to the areas in need of clearance responses. Despite these challenges, there are several districts with evidence of contamination that are accessible for humanitarian mine action operators in Somalia.
