

9MSP PRESIDENT

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF UGANDA REQUEST

As mentioned in my report, the analysing group noted in March that there remained one State Party – Uganda – with a deadline in 2009 that neither submitted a request in 2008 nor, as of 4 March 2009 had completed implementation of Article 5.

As late at 27 May 2009, Uganda had informed the States Parties that it would fulfill its obligations by its 1 August 2009 deadline.

On 2 July 2009, Uganda wrote to me to indicate that on the basis of an evaluation of new information, Uganda would not be able to comply with Article 5 by its deadline and that it would submit a request for an extension by 31 August 2009.

On 10 August 2009, I received a request submitted by Uganda.

Given the late receipt of the request, there was no chance for the analyzing group met to meet informally with representatives of Uganda.

Nevertheless, we were aided in our work by a very clear and straightforward extension request.

Some of the highlights of our analysis are as follows:

The analyzing group noted that, while activities had been undertaken by Uganda since 2006 to implement the Convention, no effort to identify areas under Uganda's jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines were known or suspected to be emplaced had been undertaken in the seven year period between entry into force and 2006.

Given the circumstances related to the late submission of the request, I wrote to Uganda to ask whether it is confident that it has now identified all mined areas.

Uganda responded by indicating that a district in western Uganda has not yet been subject to a detailed survey.

Uganda further responded by indicated that it is likely that the threat in this district would be of nuisance laid mines at the most. In addition, Uganda indicated that with an increase in capacity, a detailed survey

could be completed in this district in the near future, ensuring that all dangerous areas have been identified.

Uganda's request is for 3 years.

The analysing group noted that with Uganda committed to take steps to increase capacity and given the possibility of mechanical support becoming available, Uganda may find itself in a situation wherein it could proceed with implementation much faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested.

In terms of the plan ahead, I wrote to Uganda noting the extremely low density of mines in the areas in question and to inquire if Uganda has considered how it could more effectively use technical and non-technical survey to more efficiently deploy clearance assets to where they are really required, which in turn could increase the pace of implementation.

Uganda responded by indicating that non-technical survey has been completed in all areas of concern and that none of the areas are in use due to the suspected presence of mines.

Uganda further responded to indicate that technical survey is ongoing.

In addition, Uganda indicated that, without a known pattern or record of mines laid, the areas of concern remains as either known mined areas or suspected mined areas.

The analyzing group recorded that the request indicates that, while completion of technical survey may reduce the total clearance requirements, the requested extension period is based on the assumption that 100 percent of the areas in question will require clearance.

Given this, I wrote to Uganda to inquire if Uganda is in a position to estimate what might actually require clearance, particularly based on the experience of technical survey activities that have already taken place.

Uganda responded by indicating that there is a high suspicion that mines will be found given past casualties and information from the local population.

Noting that a GICHD study indicates that the average clearance rate is about 15-20 square metres per day per deminer, including in remote locations that contain heavy vegetation, I wrote to Uganda to seek further information about Uganda's assumption, asking if Uganda was using an overly conservative estimate and/or if Uganda has considered how it can increase its clearance rates.

Uganda responded by indicating that its clearance rate is the actual rate of clearance to date and that this is due to thick vegetation, heavy contamination in previous battle areas and the fact that Uganda is in the rainy season until December 2009.

Uganda further indicated that during the dry season the clearance rate would increase due to the lack of vegetation.

Uganda also indicated that a time and motion study is underway to identify areas of improvement in deployment and individual drills, with these factors in mind, clearance rates should increase to 15 square meters per day per deminer during the dry season.

The request indicates that land released to date is being used by former displaced persons for cultivation and resettlement. The analysing group noted that completion of Article 5 implementation during the requested extension period would have additional socio-economic benefits for Uganda.

Madame President:

The analysing group concluded that Uganda found itself in a situation wherein less than two months before its deadline it was still unclear whether it would be able to complete implementation of Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Convention by its deadline.

The analysing group further concluded that Uganda itself had acknowledged that the late commencement of operations and establishment of a mine action programme contributed to this situation occurring.

The analysing group also concluded that once Uganda understood that it would require more time to complete implementation, it acted prudently by informing me, by asking that me to inform all States Parties of this matter and by promptly preparing and submitting a request for an extension.

The analysing group concluded that, while the plan presented by Uganda is workable, the fact that the request indicates that the clearance rate will double during Uganda's dry season and that the introduction of a mechanical capacity could accelerate implementation suggests that Uganda may find itself in a situation wherein it could proceed with implementation much faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested.

The analysing group added that doing so could benefit both the Convention and Uganda itself given the indication by Uganda of the socio-economic benefits that will flow from demining.

The analysing group concluded that given the importance of external support to ensure timely implementation, Uganda could benefit from developing as soon as possible a resource mobilisation strategy that clarified the costs that Uganda's State budget would cover as part of the overall costs of implementation.

Finally, the analysing group concluded that the detailed accounting of the remaining mined areas provided by Uganda would greatly assist both Uganda and all States Parties in assessing progress in implementation during the extension period.

In this regard, the analysing group concluded that both could benefit if Uganda provided updates relative to this accounting of areas at meetings of the Standing Committees, at Meetings of the States Parties and at Review Conferences.