

ETHIOPIA'S UPDATES ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - Interessional Meeting of the State Parties

Geneva, 18 - 21 June, 2024

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

It is a great pleasure and honor to address this August Body on an overview of Ethiopia's efforts and challenges regarding the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).

Ethiopia ratified the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban (Ottawa) Convention in 2004 and enter in to force in 2005, with the goal of clearing contamination caused by landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) by 2025. Of Ethiopia's 11 regions, 7 Regions are believed to be affected by explosive ordnance (EO), including landmines. These regions contain 152 contaminated areas covering 726 square kilometers. Of these areas, Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs) make up 19%, while Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs) account for 81%. Given the remaining contamination, achieving an Anti-Personnel Landmine-free status by 2025 is not feasible. 94% of known contaminated areas are located in the Somali region.

In Tigray Region there are 35 Woredas and in Afar region there are 15 woredas are identified as contaminated areas. In Somalia, the majority of contamination from legacy mines is situated in the border areas of East Gashamo, with other areas requiring land release and cancellation. The remaining regions of Benshangul Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia, and Amhara also require re-surveying and land release. In Tigray, approximately 691,989 square meters are contaminated by landmines from the Ethio-Eritrea war (1998-2000).

Data does not include a key areas where high levels of contamination are known, such as the Eritrea border and recent Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contamination. In addition to the 3,670,349 square meter legacy minefield in Afar, there are 33 reported suspected hazardous areas in the three northern regions that require surveying. Legacy minefields exist across three international boundaries, and unexploded ordnance from recent conflicts further complicates the situation.

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Landmines have caused numerous casualties and injuries, significantly affecting local communities, especially women and children. Also, Landmines disrupt agriculture, infrastructure, and development, leading to the displacement of communities and restrictions on mobility.

The Government of Ethiopia (GoE) has commenced developing a national mine action strategy. The Government of Ethiopia continues to assess applications from five international mine action organizations (DCA, DRC, HI, Halo Trust, and BBC Media Action) for accreditation. Ethiopia is also developing national mine action technical standards, with one standard for accreditation completed last year and nine more expected to be developed in collaboration with partners in 2024 in collaboration with UNMAS.

Mr. Chair,

In delivering Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) partners reached 280,868 beneficiaries in Afar, Amhara, Tigray, and Somalia. Also, 1,485 humanitarian workers received EORE Awareness Education. Similarly training of community focal points, Data and information management, and explosive ordnance assessment continued in the northern part of the regions. The Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO) responded to emergency humanitarian and development blockages

In collaboration with UNMAS, EMAO undertook a side event at the 2024 National Directors Meeting in Geneva on Mine Action progress in Ethiopia. Ethiopia continues to integrate Convention implementation activities into national plans and responses between the mine action community and relevant humanitarian, development, and human rights communities. Mine Action efforts are included in the country's Humanitarian Response Plan and other development initiatives. Ethiopia uses all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including the Article 7 transparency report for 2023 and previous years.

Mr. Chairman

Ethiopia faces logistical and financial challenges in demining efforts, especially in accessing remotely located border minefields.

Ethiopia plans to increase surveying and clearance in un surveyed areas, complete accreditation, and sign MOUs with interested operators. The focus will be on clearing immediate blockages, improving understanding of

contamination through accurate surveys, prioritizing human resource development, strengthening technical expertise, addressing funding challenges, developing clearer verification mechanisms in the quality management system, and investing in information management with updated equipment and skills.

Ethiopia seeks further international support in the areas of financial, technical, and material assistance, as well as training and capacity-building for local demining teams.

In an effort to integrate the Convention implementation activities into national plans and responses between the mine action community and relevant humanitarian, development, and human rights communities, in Ethiopia, Mine Action is included in the Humanitarian Response Plan and other crucial documents. Also, in regards to establishing national platforms for regular stakeholder dialogue, the Mine Action Area of Responsibility is active and functional. Commemoration of international mine Awareness and Assistance to mine Action was colorfully celebrated. Also, on First of February 2024, Donors meeting was held to discuss and share on the progress made and challenges faced.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, Ethiopia call on international community to redouble its efforts to support developing countries particularly mine- affected countries in their efforts to mine clearance. In this regard, Ethiopia reaffirms its commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and calls for continued and sustained financial and technical support for mine clearance efforts.

Thank you for your attention.