Intersessional Meetings of the Mine Ban Treaty
Comments on Peru's Extension Request
19 May 2016

Thank you Madam Chair.

We commend the coordination and exchange of information between Ecuador and Peru. They both shared their experiences a number of times in front of this community, setting a useful example of cooperation between affected states.

We note that Peru submitted its request **on time**, in agreement with the process adopted by States Parties, and we thank the delegation for its presentation today. Based on the information shared by Peru, we believe that Peru should be in a position to complete clearance within **much less than the eight years it requested**.

The request is of good quality and outlines relevant activities with appropriate bodies in charge of carrying them out. It shows a genuine intention of clearing the areas. However the amount of time sought seems exceedingly long.

We recognize the terrain and climate difficulties. In absolute numbers, the remaining suspected hazardous area is small. It's the terrain that poses a major challenge, and Peru seems to have factored this in in an appropriate manner.

Peru intends to cover the cost of the entire demining programme. This is particularly noteworthy and it places Peru alongside a very small number of states that cover all or almost all their demining budget.

Madam Chair -- we have two key questions that relate both to the budget and the amount of time sought.

- Up to 87% of the annual budget for clearance is used to rent the necessary helicopters to transport deminers and equipment, and air ambulances to ensure emergency evacuations. And while this is not mentioned in the request, it appears that those are rented from the army itself – at private corporate rates, which makes clearance extremely expensive. If there was a way for the army to reduce the cost of helicopters and air ambulances, **the savings could be reallocated to having more demining teams**. Having more demining teams is indeed one of the options presented by Peru on page 13 of the annex – **this would mean clearance completion way before 2025**.

- Our other question is whether Peru is making the best possible use of the land release methodology – the section of the request that addresses the "methods used" is lacking in detail and does not offer the necessary assurances that clearance is proceeding as swiftly as possible through **the best possible use of non-technical survey and technical survey**. This could help improve outputs and enable completion within **much less than eight years**.

It is positive that Peru intends to seek out additional information and technical support on detection dogs and other methods to speed up survey and clearance. We note that the use of dogs for

identifying mines already started last year. Their use should be expanded significantly – both to identify the location of mined areas, and to release land within those areas. We trust the international community will be able to answer Peru's search for additional expertise in this field – this should be done promptly, without waiting until March 2017 as planned in the extension request.

Peru's request includes a good and thorough description of the impact of mine contamination on communities, so we encourage Peru to **revisit the way it prioritizes clearance**, to ensure the areas with the highest socio-economic impact are treated first. In addition, the largest suspected hazardous area is currently scheduled to be addressed towards the end of the extended period. If clearing this area takes longer than anticipated, Peru will miss its extended deadline. So we recommend tackling the large area at *Zamora Chinchipe Condor Mirador* earlier on.

In closing, Madam Chair -- one element we didn't see in the request is the setting up of a **residual clearance mechanism** to address any hazard that would be found after the conclusion of the clearance process. We trust Peru will draw from good practices in other countries when the time comes to set up its residual hazard response mechanism.