

Comments on the absence of an extension request from Ethiopia

Third Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty, 23 June 2014

Thank you Mr President.

We thank the states that have presented their requests today. We are surprised not to have heard from Ethiopia as we were under the impression that Ethiopia intended to submit an extension request this year.

Since the responsibility for mine action was transferred to the Ministry of Defence some years ago, we haven't heard of any significant progress on taking mines out of the ground in Ethiopia.

In accordance with the process agreed at the 7th Meeting of States Parties, states requesting extended deadlines had to submit their request in mid-December last year. Instead, at the Intersessional Meetings a few months ago in April, Ethiopia simply announced its intention to submit a request.

We thank all states that have thoroughly respected the extension request process in past years. This allows enough time for the Analyzing Group to fulfil its important mandate. Now, in the absence of an extension request from Ethiopia, we can only hope that Ethiopia intends to meet its deadline of 1 June 2015.

If unfortunately Ethiopia does not meet its deadline, then it would be in violation of the Convention as of June 2015. This would be very disappointing given the fact that it could have been avoided through the submission of a timely extension request.

We encourage States Parties to work together with Ethiopia to gain clarity on the situation.

Thank you.