

Comments on Yemen's Extension Request

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

Extension requested by Yemen: Five years, until 1 March 2020

Key comments on the request:

- Clarification is needed on the major discrepancies between contamination figures presented in the extension request and data from Yemen's latest Article 7 transparency report.
- Funds needed to implement the clearance plan exceed by far any funding dedicated to mine clearance in Yemen in the past five years.

Expectations for the Review Conference and for the extension period:

It is difficult to reconcile figures provided within the extension request, or these figures with Yemen's last Article 7 transparency report and operating results reported by the Yemen Executive Mine Action Centre (YEMAC). The figure for remaining contamination to be cleared during the extension period is a fraction of the contamination detailed in Yemen's latest Article 7 transparency report from March 2013. **Recommendation:** *Yemen should audit and rationalize its data on contamination and provide States Parties as soon as possible with a summary document setting out the extent of confirmed and suspected mined areas by governorates, using terminology consistent with International Mine Action Standards. A revised plan of action should then be submitted on the basis of the cleaned-up data and a realistic projection of its capacities.*

The main risk factors that threaten to interfere with fulfilment of the goals set out in the extension request center on security, in the context of the 2011-12 civil conflict and ongoing violence. Yemen recently admitted that during internal divisions of the armed forces in 2011-2012, members of the Republic Guard laid antipersonnel mines in violation of the Mine Ban Treaty. Insecurity has prevented YEMAC teams from conducting survey or clearance in some provinces and in the area where mines were most recently laid. **Recommendation:** *Yemen should ensure that clearance is carried out as soon as security conditions permit, especially in areas where casualties still occur.*

Yemen's deminers have sustained a high rate of accidents and casualties in recent years, notably from tackling explosive devices for which they lack proper training or equipment. **Recommendation:** *Yemen should outline what measures it is taking to improve security for deminers and what steps it is taking to give teams appropriate training and equipment for the tasks they are deployed to tackle.*

The request projects total expenditure of \$65.82 million over the five-year extension period. The estimates are extremely ambitious compared with support received in recent years, which averaged less than \$2 million in the past five years and peaked at just under \$4 million in 2012 (last year for which data is available). **Recommendation:** *Yemen should clarify its resource mobilization strategy. It should provide information on the prospects for government funding for mine action and pledges of future funding from donors.*