

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION BY TAJIKISTAN

COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Austria, Canada, Norway, Zambia)

Intersessional Meetings 30 June -2 July 2020

I. Progress in implementation (OAP Action #22, #8)

1. Tajikistan reported that in 2019, it addressed 9 mined areas measuring 1,718,185 square metres, including 880,304 square metres cancelled, 302,570 square metres reduced and 535,311 square metres cleared destroying in the process 5,219 anti-personnel mines and 189 items of explosive ordnance. The Committee observed that progress reported by Tajikistan is below the estimated amount of area projected by Tajikistan to be addressed in its 2019 extension request. The Committee would welcome information from Tajikistan on the challenges in meeting its projected milestones.
2. Tajikistan also reported that in 2019 non-technical and technical survey identified 18 mined areas measuring 1,007,262 square metres.
3. The Committee observed that information provided by Tajikistan on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2019 extension request. The Committee noted that Tajikistan has improved the quality of information by reporting in accordance with the IMAS and by using the Guide to reporting (Action #22, #8).

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge (OAP Action #18, 22)

4. The Committee observed that Tajikistan had provided a high degree of clarity on its remaining challenge (Action #18). Tajikistan reported a total of 249 mined areas measuring 11,956,466 square metres remain to be addressed, including 164 confirmed mine fields (CHA) measuring 7,770,328 square metres and 85 suspected minefields (SHA) measuring 4,186,138 square metres (Action #22).
5. The Committee observed that, with survey activities ongoing, the remaining challenge in Tajikistan will be further clarified following survey of SHAs at which time Tajikistan will be able to present more precise information on the remaining challenge. The Committee welcomes updated information on the result of these efforts (Action #18).

III. National plans for clearance and survey (OAP Actions #1, #2, #3, #19, #20, #26)

6. The Committee observed that Tajikistan had a national evidence based and costed plan for clearance and survey in place (Action #2, #19). Tajikistan reported that it would address 26 mined areas in 2020 measuring 1,363,227 square metres, and 34 mined areas measuring 1,274,964 square metres in 2021. The Committee welcomes the update on Tajikistan's annual milestones and encourages Tajikistan to continue to report on adjusted milestones on an annual basis in future reports, including information on the number of areas and amount of area to be addressed annually against updated milestones, including how priorities have been established to achieve completion as soon as possible (Action #20).
7. The Committee encourages Tajikistan to provide information on its efforts to integrate Convention implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans (Action #1).

8. Tajikistan reported that the budget for operation in 2019 totalled US \$2,618,268 which included a US \$48,600 contribution from the Government of Tajikistan. The Committee noted that the level of funding received for 2019 was less than that projected in its 2019 extension request. In this regard, the Committee encourages Tajikistan to continue to provide updates on the allocation of state resources and international support as well as gaps in funding for the implementation of its work plan (Action #1).
9. The Committee observed that, in its 2019 extension request, Tajikistan indicated that it was developing a “gender and Diversity Mine Action Strategy for Tajikistan”. The Committee welcomes this effort by Tajikistan and the Committee would welcome further information on the actions Tajikistan has taken and ways in which its work plan and strategy integrate gender and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account (Action #3).
10. The Committee would welcome further information on Tajikistan’s efforts to establish a sustainable national capacity to address any previously unknown mined areas that may be discovered following Tajikistan declaring completion of its Article 5 obligations (Action #26).

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation (OAP Actions #5, #9, #27)

11. Tajikistan reported that in 2019 it introduced four mine action policies based on its humanitarian mine action standards. The Committee welcomes the updates from Tajikistan and encourages Tajikistan to provide further information concerning the status of its National Mine Action Standards and if National Mine Action Standards are up to date with International Mine Action Standards to ensure the efficient and expedient implementation of its mine action programme (Action #5).
12. The Committee recalled that Tajikistan in its 2019 extension request indicated that it was “developing the information management system in order to provide the relevant government agencies and communities with the necessary information”. The Committee would welcome further information from Tajikistan on its efforts to maintain an accurate and up-to-date information management system (Action #9).
13. The Committee noted that Tajikistan in its 2019 indicated its efforts taken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance operations and welcomes further information from Tajikistan in this regard (Action #27).

V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them

14. The Committee recalled that in granting Tajikistan’s request, the Fourth Review Conference requested Tajikistan to submit updated information on several matters. The Committee welcomes the information provided by Tajikistan regarding; progress made relative to the commitments contained in Tajikistan’s annual survey and clearance plan during the extension period disaggregated by area cancelled, reduced and cleared and their impact on annual targets as given in Tajikistan’s work plan; updates regarding resource mobilisation efforts, including resources made available from Tajikistan’s state budget and external financing received to support implementation efforts.
15. The Committee would welcome further information from Tajikistan regarding;

- Progress on the agreement between the Governments of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan regarding survey and clearance of areas on their common border, including information on the national institutions involved in the effort;
- Updates regarding the identification, recruitment, training and deployment of an additional 90 deminers and support personnel, including information on the gender and diversity of newly recruited personnel in line with Tajikistan's "Gender and Diversity Mine Action Strategy";
- Updated information on its full range of practical methods used to release land, including reporting outcomes concerning the feasibility and deployment of mechanical assets;
- Efforts to mitigate the impact of anti-personnel mines to the population through mine risk education and reduction efforts as well as information on injuries and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, ensuring that these activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive taking into account the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities; and
- Updates regarding the structure of Tajikistan's mine action program, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion.

16. The Committee also recalled that in granting Tajikistan's request, the Conference noted that, "the implementation of Tajikistan's national demining plan may be affected by pending survey and agreements on survey and clearance in border areas as well as the feasibility of deploying mechanical assets, requested that Tajikistan submit to the States Parties, by 30 April 2021 and by 31 October 2023, a updated work plans for the remaining period covered by the extension request. The Conference requested that these work plans contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas would be dealt with each year by which organizations during the remaining period covered by the request, and a revised detailed budget".

VI. Mine risk education and reduction (OAP Actions #28-32)

17. Tajikistan reported on the actions it has taken to effectively exclude the population from areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines. Tajikistan reported that warning signs in the language of the local population are installed in confirmed mine fields and mine risk education has been included in the school curricula (Action #32). The Committee would welcome additional information on Tajikistan's effort to integrate mine risk education activist into wider humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts. (Action#28).

18. The Committee would also welcome further information from Tajikistan on its efforts to develop context-specific mine risk education and reduction programmes (MRE/R) on the basis of a needs assessment and that these programmes are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account (Action #29).

19. The Committee would welcome further information on Tajikistan's efforts to link mine risk education and reduction programmes and messages to an analysis of available casualty and contamination data and its efforts to develop a national capacity to deliver these programmes (Action #30, #31).

20. The Committee would further welcome additional information on the results achieved in delivering mine risk education and other risk educational programmes including the methodologies used, the challenges faced, with information disaggregated by gender and age (Action #32).