
**Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel
Mines and on Their Destruction**

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Item 12 of the agenda

Consideration of requests submitted under article 5

**Request for extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
article 5 of the Convention**

Executive summary

Submitted by the Republic of the Congo

1. The purpose of this document, which is based on article 5.4 of the Ottawa Treaty, is to request an extension of two years of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines. Justification for this request is provided below.

Origin of the challenges faced in the implementation of article 5

2. The district of Kimongo, in the south-east of the Republic of the Congo, is the area most affected by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war. This is the result of the various armed conflicts that have occurred in the area between 1960 and 1997.

3. From 1960 to 1963, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), fleeing Portuguese repression, had installed several armed bases on the territory of the Republic of the Congo, particularly in the villages of Kangakala, Ilou Panga, Pangui and Kouni. The largest of these bases was situated in Moumagna Baloungou, 10 km from the village of Moukéké, in the triangle between the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola.

4. From 1964 to 1996, MPLA set up a second base 25 km from Kimongo between the villages of Yanza and Pangui. The Portuguese had densely mined the area, especially the access routes.

5. In 1967, President Massamba-Débat secured the transfer of those bases to Angola, near to the village of Mazaba.

6. In 1975, following the independence of Angola, the retreating Angolan resistance fighters mined the area between the villages of Moukondzi and Moukéké as they left.

7. Between 1977 and 1978, armed conflict broke out between the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) and MPLA in the area between the village of Pangui and the border.

8. In 1997, following the end of conflict in the Republic of the Congo, the Angolan Armed Forces withdrew from the village of Pangui, leaving behind them a high concentration of explosive remnants of war.

Effect of suspected danger zones on the economic life of the population

9. The district of Kimongo consists of plantations, forests and semi-mountainous areas. The main economic activities include agriculture, family livestock farming, market gardening, firewood collection and brick production.

10. The local population has abandoned a large amount of the land and forests that would be suitable for their activities. In order to be able to safely carry out their market gardening activities, the village women stay close to residential areas.

11. As a result of this new situation, output has fallen considerably because of the reduction of available farmed land.

Methods used to identify areas containing anti-personnel mines and reasons for suspecting the presence of anti-personnel mines in other areas

12. Some ten persons (civil and military) have been trained in socio-economic and preliminary opinion survey techniques. In the field, they distributed forms in order to collect information concerning the suspected danger zone.

13. In order to ensure the reliability of the information, all of the data collected in the areas in question were confirmed by at least three different persons. However, it is worth noting that no technical verification took place in the field.

14. The suspected danger zone currently comprises six villages, namely Moukondzi, Ilou Panga, Pangui, Nganda-Mbinda, Moukéké and Kinzieté.

Efforts undertaken to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas

15. Local civil and military authorities have carried out awareness-raising visits to inform the population of the danger presented by these devices.

16. No special warning was issued regarding the suspected danger zone where the local people had stopped their farming activities.

17. To date, there have been 14 deaths from anti-personnel mines in this district (the most recent having occurred in 1997).

Circumstances which prevent compliance within the time limit of 10 years

18. The Republic of the Congo has been unable to achieve the objectives set by the target date of 1 November 2011 for the following reasons:

- (a) The recurring climate of insecurity in the area between the Angolan Armed Forces and FLEC;
- (b) The lack of adequate technical and logistical means to carry out demining activities;
- (c) A complex geographical situation, with a mixture of forests, mountains and rivers;
- (d) A lack of financial resources: the failure to include demining and mine-clearance activities in the State budget delays any significant progress with this kind of operation.

Workplan for the proposed extension period 2012–2013

19. In order to fulfil its obligations under article 5 of the Convention, the Republic of the Congo requests an extension of two years, to 2012–2013.

20. This extension is required for the following operations:

- (a) Mapping the probability of pollution;
 - (b) Developing Congolese mine action standards;
 - (c) Carrying out technical surveys;
 - (d) Resuming non-technical studies;
 - (e) Demining, quality control and land rehabilitation activities, in strict compliance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS 08.22);
 - (f) Collecting funds. The required funds will come in part from the 2012 State budget and in part from additional support from international partners.
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