
**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 9 of the provisional agenda
**Informal presentation of requests submitted
under article 5 and of the analysis of these requests**

**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 Niger*

1. Niger ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction on 23 March 1999, and the Convention entered into force for Niger on 1 September 1999. Niger was among the first signatories of the Convention. In its initial transparency report, submitted under article 7 on 28 February 2000, Niger stated, in accordance with article 5, that the presence of anti-personnel mines was suspected in areas of its territory following a number of mine accidents, recorded mainly during and after the armed rebellion of 1990–2000. All the accidents recorded during that period were caused by anti-tank mines, although two of them, occurring in Arlit and Tedjidda-n-Tagait, suggested that anti-personnel mines may also have been used.

2. Under article 5 of the Convention, Niger had until 1 September 2009 to confirm whether anti-personnel mines were present in these areas and, if so, to destroy all such mines detected there. At the June 2008 meeting of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Mine Action Technologies and prior to the expiry of its 10-year deadline, Niger declared that, further to the peace agreements, those presumed to have laid anti-personnel mines had reported, when consulted, that they had never used anti-personnel mines in the course of hostilities during the 1990–2000 rebellion. However, they had used anti-tank mines with harmful effects on people, leading to the belief that anti-personnel mines might have been used in the two locations mentioned above.

* Document submitted after the deadline in unedited form, on being received by the Secretariat from the Implementation Support Unit.

3. Since February 2007 Niger has faced renewed security threats as a result of attacks carried out by an armed movement. Mines have been laid as part of these attacks, making access and movement difficult for the local population and development partners. The conflict has led to a recurrence of incidents arising from the laying of mines, but the recorded accidents occurring since February 2007 have involved only anti-tank and anti-vehicle mines. In that context, and based on all the accidents recorded up to that point, in 2008 Niger confirmed that the presence of anti-personnel mines was no longer suspected in its territory and that the problem it currently faced related to the presence of anti-vehicle mines.

4. In June 2011, following the change in the security situation after the conflict in the north of the country and the Libyan crisis, Niger carried out an assessment mission that revealed the presence of a minefield in the north of the Agadez region, in the department of Bilma (Dirkou) on the military post of Madama. The surface area of the minefield is estimated at 2,400 square metres, although Niger believes that some mines have moved because of the sandstorms that are typical of the region's climate. The minefield is marked by a new perimeter fence and by the presence of a military surveillance post.

5. Niger also suspects that anti-personnel mines are present in five other areas (Zouzoudinga, Achouloulouma, Orida, Enneri and Blaka), also located in the Agadez region, and the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites – CNCAAI) has identified, in addition to these five areas, a number of suspect areas on roads and paths.

6. No general assessment mission or technical study has been carried out in these areas because of the security threat that has prevailed until now. The assessment mission was unable to visit all the planned locations; some were inaccessible because of unsatisfactory security conditions. All the areas will be the subject of general inquiries in order to definitively dispel doubts concerning the presence of mines.

7. Considering it impossible to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in the mined area in Madama or to conduct the planned investigations to confirm whether anti-personnel mines are present in the suspect areas before the Thirteenth Meeting of the States parties, Niger requests an extension of the deadline until 31 December 2015.

8. To prepare for the completion of the remaining work, Niger has adopted the following measures: development of national standards that conform with the International Mine Action Standards; training and refresher training of deminers; training and deployment of eight community liaison agents to raise awareness among the population; installation of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) and training of IMSMA users, planned for July 2013; planning of a specific two-year programme for 2014–2015 to clear Madama and to confirm whether anti-personnel mines are present in the other suspect areas, as well as to demine and clear them if mines are detected.

9. In the wake of the first armed conflict (1991–1995), between Government forces and non-State armed movements and with the aim of safeguarding peace, Niger, following the example of other countries in the Economic Community of West African States, set up CNCAAI by Decree No. 94-185/PRN of 28 November 1994. In order to restructure and expand the remit of CNCAAI, which is responsible for humanitarian demining, the original decree has been amended by Decrees Nos. 99-417/PCRN of 8 October 1999 and 2010-560/PCSRD of 22 July 2010.

10. CNCAAI serves as a focal point for implementation of the regional and international arms conventions, agreements and treaties that have been signed and ratified by Niger. It is an interministerial institution coming under the Office of the President of the Republic and made up of some 40 members appointed by decree and comprising representatives of ministries involved in security matters, traditional leaders and civil society actors (non-

governmental organizations and associations working in the area of peace and development).

11. The structure of CNCCAI is organized into six subcommissions, each with a director, which comprise different National Commission members according to their competencies and expertise. They are: the Subcommission on Combating Mines and Cluster Munitions; the Subcommission on Small Arms and Light Weapons; the Subcommission on Chemical, Biological and Nuclear Weapons; the Subcommission on Information, Education and Awareness; the Subcommission on Administrative, Legal and Financial Matters; and the Subcommission on International Humanitarian Law.

12. Niger has a two-year workplan for 2014–2015 for the demining of the Madama military zone and the conduct of a technical study. The expected results are as follows: (i) the mined or polluted areas of the Madama military camp will be demined and other suspect areas identified; (ii) the population will be made aware of the danger of anti-personnel mines; and (iii) the capacities of CNCCAI will be strengthened and its actions monitored and evaluated. The plan provides for the completion of the technical study by CNCCAI in 2014 and training and refresher training for deminers before their field deployment in 2015.

13. The cost of implementing the workplan has been estimated at US\$ 800,000 and the contribution of Niger, through CNCCAI, at US\$ 250,000. It is anticipated that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will contribute US\$ 23,000 for the training of deminers.

14. Despite its modest means, Niger has the political will to cover some 50 per cent of the cost of the programme, financially and in kind. The support of bilateral and multilateral partners will be invaluable to Niger in guaranteeing the implementation of article 5 of the Convention. Also bearing in mind the difficulties of the area, there will be a need for cutting-edge technological material and vehicles.

15. Niger's envisaged in-kind contribution through CNCCAI, which is responsible for humanitarian demining, will consist of the provision of demining teams and their expertise; security during the demining process, bearing in mind the difficulties and security problems in the country; support vehicles, subject to availability; and logistics, as far as possible.

16. CNCCAI is seeking funding for this workplan and UNDP, which already supports humanitarian demining operations concerning anti-tank mines, has indicated its readiness to continue its support. Additionally, the European Union has demonstrated its willingness to support the technical study in the areas mentioned.

17. The project will be implemented in the border areas of Niger, a desert environment made difficult by the occasionally shifting sands and the heat. Nevertheless, Niger notes that the only risk factors hindering the smooth conduct of these activities are, without doubt, issues relating to the full funding of the action plan and the lack of security resulting from the terrorist threats in Niger and at the borders with certain countries.

18. CNCCAI has taken appropriate steps to mitigate the sometimes unpredictable security problems by establishing a reinforced team responsible for security during the demining process and seeking the cooperation of the local population.
