



Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Statement on behalf of
the Analysis Group for Article 4 Extension Requests
(Afghanistan, Montenegro, Sweden and the Netherlands)
at
Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions,
agenda item 7, organization of work**

20 September 2021

Mauritania

Mr President,

Thank you for giving me the floor, I have the honour to present on behalf of the Analysis Group for Article 4 extension requests the report on the extension request by Mauritania. The report is contained in document CCM/CONF/2021/2. Due to the late submission of the report, currently only an advanced copy is available of this document. Allow me to take this opportunity, to once again stress the importance of timely submission of extension requests, to allow the Analysis Group sufficient time to consider the request, seek clarification where needed and submit its report well advance of the meeting. In the interest of time, I will only touch upon the salient points of our conclusion and recommendations.

Mr President,

Mauritania signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) on 19 April 2010 and following its ratification on 1 February 2012, the Convention entered into force for it on 1 August 2012. In Mauritania's initial transparency report submitted in 2013, it reported to have a total of 10 km² of cluster munition contaminated area, which was subsequently reduced to 1.96 km² and reported to have been completely cleared. Mauritania declared completion of clearance operations on 9 September 2013 and submitted its official declaration of compliance with Article 4 of the CCM at the 5th Meeting of States Parties in September 2014, well before its initial deadline of 1 August 2022.

In its 2019 annual transparency report, Mauritania reported to have discovered 36 km² of previously unknown cluster munition contaminated areas. In its extension request submitted on 30 June 2021, Mauritania reported that following a non-technical survey conducted in March 2021, the estimated contaminated area has been reduced to 14.02 km². As the clearance of this contaminated areas cannot be completed before the deadline of 1 August 2022, Mauritania submitted an extension request for 2 years on 30 June 2021. Following an initial assessment by the Analysis Group, additional information was provided at the request of the Analysis Group on 28 July 2021. All these submissions have been posed on the website of the Convention.

Mr President.

In its report, the Analysis Group acknowledges that Mauritania had earlier declared completion of its Article 4 obligations in 2014 and commends Mauritania for its transparency in reporting on the previously unknown cluster munition contamination. The Analysis Group applauds Mauritania for only requesting the amount of time deemed necessary to meet all its obligations under Article 4 and not the maximum allowable time, based on a work plan that is feasible and can be monitored by States Parties. The Group also notes that the success of the plan is contingent upon the ability of Mauritania to secure

funding and mobilize the requisite resources. In this context, the Group takes note of Mauritania's commitment to seek international cooperation and assistance to complete its clearance operations and recommends that in line with Article 6 of the Convention, Mauritania takes actions to enhance resource mobilization including the establishment of a country coalition to improve coordination in implementing the work plan included in its extension request.

The Analysis Group strongly supports the intention of the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development to update its national mine action standards to be in line with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The Group further recommends that during this review process Mauritania takes into consideration IMAS terminology relating to the land release process, its individual components (Non-Technical Survey, Technical Survey, Clearance) and their sequencing, and to provide an update at the 10MSP.

The Analysis Group notes that Mauritania should provide more emphasis on risk education/explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities, particularly for the at-risk nomadic population and strongly recommends that Mauritania develops and implements a comprehensive plan for this as soon as possible including who will conduct EORE, the target groups and the methodology to be used. The Analysis Group acknowledges Mauritania's commitment to ensure that gender and diversity are mainstreamed within mine action, and recommends that this consideration should include a plan to integrate these cross-cutting elements into all appropriate activities related to the survey and clearance of cluster munition remnants and implementation of EORE.

The Analysis Group notes that Mauritania will address any residual risk and recommends that it establishes a sustainable national residual capacity to deal with the residual risk of any submunitions discovered after completion, including mechanisms for reporting.

In recommending to grant the two-year extension to Mauritania, the Analysis Group notes that the Convention would benefit from Mauritania reporting annually through its Article 7 reports and at Meetings of States Parties or Review Conferences on the following:

- a) Progress made relative to the work plan projections Mauritania made in its extension request;
- b) Updated information on the remaining contamination after further technical survey and an updated work plan based on the new information gathered;
- c) Resource mobilization efforts made to support implementation efforts;
- d) Progress on the review/update of Mauritania's national mine action standards, in line with the latest International Mine Action Standards, development and implementation of a risk education/EORE activity plan for the target community and progress on the establishment of a national residual risk capacity;
- e) Other relevant information.

In addition to reporting to the States Parties as noted above, Mauritania should consider of keeping the States Parties regularly apprised of other pertinent developments as necessary.

Thank you Mr President