

Statement on Clearance
17th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
29 November 2018



We warmly congratulate Mauritania on their important announcement made this morning. Colonel Alioune Ould Mennane, thank you for your leadership.

Madam President -- This year, the Committee on Article 5 reiterated that, under the Convention, all mined areas must be cleared, whether or not they are difficult to reach and no matter what type of antipersonnel mines they contain.

A ce sujet, l'ICBL souhaite attirer votre attention vers ce flyer, co-signé par de nombreuses organisations. Tel qu'indique ici, tout engin explosif improvisé qui peut être activé par la présence, la proximité ou le contact d'une personne est en fait une mine antipersonnel. Peu importe qui l'a utilisée, qui l'a fabriquée, ou comment elle a été fabriquée. Les zones contaminées par tout type de mine, qu'elles soient manufacturées ou improvisées, doivent être déclarées en vertu de l'article 7 et déminées en vertu de l'article 5. Lorsque des mines improvisées sont découvertes sur le territoire d'un Etat partie à la Convention d'interdiction des mines, toutes les parties prenantes du déminage devraient soutenir les autorités nationales afin que la présence de ces mines improvisées et les efforts de déminage fassent l'objet de rapports exacts, en conformité avec la Convention.

Indeed, failing to report on the suspected or confirmed presence of antipersonnel mines on one's territory can raise an issue of compliance with the Mine Ban Treaty. In this respect, we call in particular on Nigeria to urgently make public statements in this forum, and to share information on any landmine contamination on its territory. Nigeria has not submitted a transparency report in the last five years. It is our understanding that the group Boko Haram has been using improvised mines, and that UNMAS is providing assistance with clearance efforts. The ICBL has been asking for public statements on the matter from Nigeria since at least 2015. It is high time to hear more about the issue and about its impact on Nigeria's Mine Ban Treaty obligations.

All the other States Parties where non-state armed groups may have used antipersonnel mines in recent years, such as Cameroon and Mali, must also report any contamination under Article 7 and clear it under Article 5. The list of states that have obligations under Article 5 is not static, it is a fluid one – some states may be added to the list when a suspicion of contamination arises. It is the responsibility of this entire community to pay special attention to cases of newly found contamination.

In closing, Madam President, we listened with attention to the presentations made during this session and we are alarmed that Tajikistan intends to request until 2030 to complete clearance. We wish to ask how States Parties intend to handle requests for extended deadlines that go well beyond 2025.