

# **ICBL Comments on Extension Requests - Senegal, 25 November 2008**

As we describe in more detail in the extension request critiques we circulated, the ICBL finds that Senegal has made limited progress in meeting its Article 5 obligations, with almost no land cleared to date to humanitarian standards and no clear picture of the true extent of the contamination. While the conflict with the MFDC made it difficult to begin demining operations before the end of 2004, if the national authority and mine action center had been set up earlier, demining operations might have been able to begin much more quickly after the nominal end of the conflict. Reasons for the continued lack of progress—especially given apparent success in raising funds for demining—are not clear. While some areas remain difficult to access for security reasons, there appear to be several places where the demining operations could begin immediately, and rapid progress could likely be made on known mined areas beginning with the few high priority sites.

Even considering the special security challenges Senegal is facing, given the level of estimated contamination and predictions of even less contamination after technical survey, an extension of seven years seems to be excessive. We encourage Senegal to quickly set out plans to conduct technical survey of all its suspected hazardous areas to identify contaminated areas and then revise its strategic plan accordingly with a view to finishing its Article 5 obligations as soon as possible.