
**Fifth Review Conference 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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Items 7 and 11 of the provisional agenda

Presentation of requests submitted under Article 5 and of the analyses of these requests**Consideration of submissions of States parties as provided for in Article 5****Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
Article 5 of the Convention****Summary****Submitted by the Niger***

1. The Niger has signed and ratified most arms-related instruments, those relating to landmines in particular. It 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 it entered into force for the Niger on 1 September 1999. The Niger was one of the first countries to sign the Convention. The Niger is also a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Protocol I, Amended Protocol II, Protocol III and Protocol IV thereto.
2. Under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Niger had until 1 September 2009 to confirm whether there were or not anti-personnel mines in the areas indicated and, if there were, to destroy them.
3. Since February 2007, the Republic of the Niger has experienced insecurity following a series of violent clashes for which an armed movement is responsible. In the course of these clashes, mines were laid, causing difficulties for local communities and development partners. There have also been numerous accidents caused by anti-vehicle mines in the context of this conflict.
4. Since 2015, some of the country's regions have been dealing with the threat of explosive devices, improvised explosive devices in particular. The fear of the mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices present as a result of the action of armed terrorist groups has made humanitarian agencies hesitant to enter Diffa and Tillabéri. There have been several hundred recorded incidents involving explosive devices since 2015 (see in this respect a 2020 report in which the contamination of Tillabéri, Tahoua and Diffa Regions by mines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war is assessed).
5. The Niger tasked the National Commission for Illicit Arms Collection and Control with national missions to assess the threat posed by improvised explosive devices in 2016 and 2020. Most of the explosive devices are, according to the assessments, activated by the victim, a finding confirmed by data provided by the defence and security forces. These victim-activated devices clearly meet the definition of anti-personnel mines.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



6. More than 200,000 people living in areas affected by explosive devices are at risk. The prevalence of incidents related to such devices also limits the ability of civilians to travel by road to weekly markets and the main towns of the communes or departments.

7. Accidents involving anti-personnel mines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war have an impact not only on the victims but also on communities and the country's economy. The consequences are as follows:

- i. The movement of goods and people is restricted;
- ii. The prospect of a return to peace and security becomes more distant;
- iii. Land needed for farming becomes inaccessible;
- iv. Access to water, other resources, infrastructure and means of communication or distribution (roads, power lines and so on) becomes more difficult or is cut off entirely;
- v. Access to school buildings is limited, and the resumption of schooling may even be prevented.

8. In 2011, in the wake of the change to the security situation caused by the conflict in the north of the Niger and the Libyan crisis, the Niger commissioned an assessment mission, and in May 2014 non-technical and technical surveys confirmed the presence of an anti-personnel minefield, ID51, at the Madama military outpost in Bilma (Dirkou) Department, located in northern Agadez Region.

9. Consequently, the Niger requested and obtained a two-year extension, with a deadline of 31 December 2015, to eliminate these mines.

10. This extension request was granted on the basis of the 2,400 m² to be demined. The technical survey done by specialists from the Niger, however, identified contaminated areas totalling 39,304 m², and in 2015 another adjacent area of approximately 196,243 m² contaminated by both anti-personnel and anti-tank mines was discovered.

11. In November 2014, the Niger, eager to honour its commitments under the Convention, used public funds to deploy a team of more than 60 deminers, and as a result mined areas were cleared and the Madama military outpost became a battalion-level unit.

12. The second extension, which ended on 31 December 2020, had been requested with a view to demining the 39,304 m², as well as 196,243 m² plot adjacent to the Madama outpost.

13. The 39,304 m² minefield has been wholly cleared, as have 18,483 m² of the adjoining area. More than 177,760 m² must still be cleared. This area, which is marked, is fenced off by barbed wire.

14. These areas are border areas, not easily accessible, in a hostile environment characterized by climatic hazards such as sandstorms, intense heat and cold. Moreover, the Niamey–Madama road can be travelled only with a weekly military escort. The National Commission for Illicit Arms Collection and Control is short of resources and must also deal with other priorities, such as combating the spread of illicit arms and the fight against terrorist groups.

15. Nonetheless, resource constraints – regrettably, no aid or assistance of any form has been offered by partners – are the sole obstacle to proper clearance operations.

16. Insecurity – terrorist threats in the country and on its borders with some other countries – is the other obstacle. To deal with this sometimes unpredictable insecurity factor, the National Commission has taken appropriate mitigation measures, including setting up a reinforced security team for humanitarian demining and seeking the cooperation of local communities.

17. In view of the extent of the current contamination, the Niger is not in a position to meet its commitments by 31 December 2024. As a result, the Niger has put together this request, its fourth, this time for a five-year extension of the deadline, to 31 December 2029, for completing the destruction of these anti-personnel mines.

18. In preparation for the work ahead, the Niger has taken the following steps:

- i. Drafted national standards compatible with International Mine Action Standards;
- ii. Organized training and refresher courses for deminers;
- iii. Trained and deployed community relays;
- iv. Drafted standard operating procedures;
- v. Acquired additional technical equipment for mine clearance;
- vi. Cleared area: 0.0 m²;
- vii. Number of mines unearthed and destroyed: none.

19. A five-year demining workplan has been drawn up for the Madama area. Although the Niger has but modest means, it has the political will to contribute US\$ 500,000 over five years to finance part of the programme. The Niger is seeking a contribution of US\$ 2,373,500 from the international community for the remainder of the programme. In view of the difficulties of the area, there is also a need for high-tech equipment such as protective gear, detection equipment and vehicles.

20. Expected results of the workplan:

(a) Humanitarian demining: mined or contaminated areas of the Madama military outpost will be cleared and other suspect areas will be identified;

(b) Activities: humanitarian demining operations (acquisition of demining and destruction equipment, training, including refresher courses, for 60 deminers and deployment of demining teams in the field);

(c) The National Commission's capacities will be strengthened and its actions will be monitored and evaluated;

(d) Activities: capacity-building in expertise and outside quality control.

21. The Niger is of the view that the 60 deminers are fully capable of clearing the remaining areas if the required resources are obtained.

22. Without the support of its partners, however, the Niger can give no guarantee that the Madama site will be cleared. The National Commission is still looking for funding to enable it to realize its plan to demine Madama. At the national and international level, the Niger continues to call for the completion of demining.
