

## 9MSP PRESIDENT

### INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF TAJIKISTAN'S REQUEST

On 31 March 2009, I received a request submitted by Tajikistan.

As was the case with other requesting States Parties, during the week of 25 to 29 May 2009, the analyzing group met informally with representatives of Tajikistan in order to gain a better understanding of the request.

In addition, the analyzing group benefited from expert input provided by a demining operator that has been active in Tajikistan.

Some of the highlights of our analysis are as follows:

The analyzing group noted the shortcomings associated with Tajikistan's original estimate of the size and locations of mined areas and the recognition by Tajikistan of the necessity for resurvey activities.

In addition, the analysing group noted that the request indicates that survey activities to be completed by the end of 2009 will result in a clearer picture of what work remains along the Tajik-Afghan border.

The request indicates that in the four years leading up to December 2008, a significant amount of area has been cleared.

The analysing group noted that, while demining efforts have constantly increased since the end of 2004, between entry into force and the end of 2004 no demining work had been undertaken.

In terms of the work that remains, the analysing group also noted that the precise extent of the implementation challenge along the Tajik-Uzbek border remains unclear given the nature of survey that has been used.

In commenting on a draft of our analysis, Tajikistan indicated that resurvey activities it plans to undertake do not include those along its border with Uzbekistan.

Given the ambiguity of the extent of the implementation challenge faced by Tajikistan along its border with Uzbekistan, I wrote to Tajikistan.

In particular, I requested clarity regarding efforts that have taken place or that are planned to carry out surveys and clearance in areas under the control of Tajikistan, and, Tajikistan's plan to approach demining once it has a political agreement on the delineation of the border.

Tajikistan responded by indicating that some delimited areas are accessible for survey, that it plans to start resurvey operations in 2010, that these operations will be completed in 2010 at which time planning for clearance will begin and then actual clearance depends on a political decision between the two countries.

I also wrote to ask whether prospective work along the Tajik-Uzbek border had been incorporated into the plan presented in the request.

Tajikistan responded by indicating that prospective work along the Tajik-Uzbek border is not incorporated into the plan, that "as the State border line is not fixed fully in the international legal form" demining operations are not possible, and that as a result Tajikistan does not have complete information on minefields in Tajikistan.

Also in this context, given the significance Tajikistan attaches to a UNDP evaluation of Tajikistan's mine action programme, the analysing group noted that the evaluation report indicates that a cursory inspection of the suspected hazardous areas along the Tajik-Uzbek border "suggests these are on the Uzbek side of the border."

Tajikistan's request is for 10 years.

The analysing group noted that this projected amount of time is based on the assumption that only 20 percent of areas to be addressed would be suitable for mechanical demining, that this assumption was based on what the author of the UNDP evaluation report admits was "a short field trip" to one location and that the report also indicates that the mine clearance organisation estimates that 60 percent of areas could be subject to mechanical demining.

Given the significance of the acquisition of mechanical assets to the execution of the plan put forward by Tajikistan, I wrote to Tajikistan to inquire about efforts to acquire and the likelihood of acquiring the equipment in question.

Tajikistan responded by indicating that it is cooperating with the several donors on this matter and received a promise from one donor that Tajikistan will receive a machine in 2010.

The request indicates that Tajikistan projects that US\$ 42.3 million will be required for activities related to the implementation of Article 5 during the period of 2009-2019.

Again recalling the significance Tajikistan attaches to its 2008 UNDP evaluation of its mine action programme, the analysing group noted that the evaluation report indicates that "there are insufficient discussions with donors, which is significant given the resource shortfalls."

The request indicates that there have been significant socio-economic gains made since entry into force as a result of Article 5 implementation.

In this regard, the analysing group noted that completion of Article 5 implementation during the requested extension period had the potential of making a significant contribution to improving human safety and socio-economic conditions in Tajikistan.

Madame President: The analysing group concluded that while no demining had taken place until more than four years after entry into force, since that time significant progress has been made, particularly by the release of land through resurvey.

The analysing group further noted that, while the plan presented is workable as concerns two of the three regions of Tajikistan, differing views on the extent to which mechanical demining assets may be applicable suggest that Tajikistan may find itself in a situation wherein it could proceed with implementation much faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested.

The analysing group added that doing so could benefit Tajikistan in ensuring that the dire humanitarian, social and economic impacts outlined by Tajikistan in its request are addressed as quickly as possible.

The analysing group also noted that both Tajikistan and all States Parties would benefit if the plan incorporated Tajikistan's intensions during the requested extension period as concerns the Tajik-Uzbek border.

The analysing group noted that given the importance of external support to ensure timely implementation, Tajikistan could benefit from developing as soon as possible a resource mobilisation strategy.

In this regard, the analysing group concluded that, given that Tajikistan projects that it will require slightly more funds on an annual basis than it has received in recent years, Tajikistan could benefit from acting on recommendations made to increase its frequency of contact with donors and to clearly communicate the socio-economic development benefits that would flow from completing Article 5 implementation.

The analysing group concluded that the accounting of the remaining mined areas provided by Tajikistan would greatly assist both Tajikistan and all States Parties in assessing progress in implementation during the extension period.

In this context, the analysing group again noted that all could benefit if additional clarity was provided on the location and status of areas suspected to contain mines along the Tajik-Uzbek border and Tajikistan's plans to proceed in addressing all such areas under its jurisdiction or control.

Finally, the analysing group also noted that both Tajikistan and all States Parties could benefit if Tajikistan provided updates on such matters at meetings of the Standing Committees, at the Second Review Conference and at Meetings of the States Parties.

Thank you.