

**Comments on Chile's Article 4 Extension Request
Delivered by Norwegian People's Aid, on behalf of Mine Action Review
Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (part 1)
25–27 November 2020**

Thank you, Mr, President.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Mine Action Review project.

We warmly congratulate Chile on completing its mine clearance operations in February, ahead of its extended 1 March 2020 deadline under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

In comparison to the mined areas, the extent of cluster munition remnant contamination, which is entirely on military training ranges, is relatively limited and Chile could have fulfilled its Article 4 obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions within its original ten year deadline, had it elected to do so. However, Chile made the decision to first complete clearance of anti-personnel mines considered to be present in areas that posed a potential risk to civilians. Chile further indicated its inability to conduct mine and cluster munition clearance simultaneously due to limited national resources and capacities.

In 2019, in a welcome development, Chile released cluster munition-contaminated area for the first time since becoming a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2011, cancelling over 32km² identified as not being contaminated. This is approximately one third of the original total contaminated area. The remaining area, totalling nearly 65km², is likely to still be an overestimate as some clearance of remnants was conducted previously by the military after use. However, as it is not known whether previous clearance was conducted according to international standards, Chile is required to undertake technical survey and clearance to make "every effort" to identify and clear all cluster munition-contaminated areas.

In January 2020, Chile submitted an initial draft Article 4 deadline extension request to 2026, but in July 2020 it submitted a revised request, seeking an interim one-year extension to 1 June 2022. Mine Action Review supports Chile's decision to submit an interim request, in order to conduct technical survey to further clarify the extent of remaining contamination before submitting a follow-on request that will provide a more detailed plan for completion of its Article 4 obligations.

Chile has stated, however, that its ability to conduct technical survey is resource dependent and reliant on it completing the restructuring of its national mine action programme. It has also said that the COVID-19 pandemic could pose serious financial risks, which might affect its ability to implement the planned activities. Having delayed clearance for so long, there must be no further delays.

Mine Action Review commends the work that Chile has done to mainstream gender across the armed forces with women working at all levels of the mine action programme. While only 4% of demining personnel were female in 2019, Chile has stated in its extension request that due to its awareness of the increasing importance of the implementation of gender perspectives in the field of disarmament, the Ministry of National Defense will promote women to the teams that will conduct clearance of cluster munitions.

Mine Action Review calls upon Chile to:

- Prioritise and complete the restructuring of its national mine action programme without delay, to ensure that the necessary management structure is in place to support the survey and clearance of cluster munition-contaminated areas.
- Secure sufficient resources to complete technical survey by its requested interim Article 4 deadline.
- Submit a more detailed annual work plan once technical survey has been completed, including the actual capacity the Army, Navy, and Air Force plan to deploy at each of the four sites per year and annual targets for land release.
- Elaborate a detailed gender and diversity policy and implementation plan.

Thank you.