

Gender and Diversity Working Group (GDWG) Statement on Agenda item 9: Presentation of requests for extension of deadlines submitted under Article 4 of the Convention and of the analysis of these requests.

CCM Meeting of State Parties, 16-19 September 2025

Thank you, Madam. Chair.

This statement is delivered on behalf of the thirteen member organisations of the Gender and Diversity Working Group (GDWG). We wish to share brief reflections on how gender and diversity considerations have been addressed in this year's Article 4 extension requests under consideration.

We would like to highlight the following positive developments reflected in this year's extension requests:

We welcome that **Afghanistan's** new national mine action strategy reportedly identifies gender and diversity as a key goal. Under the leadership of Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC), Afghanistan reports that it is considering gender and diversity in all its mine action activities, to ensure the needs and priorities of women, men, and children and diverse group of people are integrated into mine action planning, prioritization, implementation, monitoring, and reporting. We look forward to the publication of the new strategy and to seeing these commitments translated into meaningful action on the ground, including during survey, EORE, and VA.

Chile has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and reports taking steps to incorporate a gender and diversity perspective within the armed forces. While there are no gender restrictions on the integration of EOD units and instructions have been issued to encourage women's participation in cluster munition remnants clearance, participation remains voluntary. Despite the inclusive framework, no female personnel participated in technical survey in Chile in 2024.

As highlighted in **Lebanon's** extension request, the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) is working to implement an inclusive mine action programme and prioritises gender mainstreaming across all activities. Of the five objectives in Lebanon's 2020–2025 National Mine Action Strategy, the fifth underscores the importance of addressing 'the specific needs and perspectives of women, girls, men, and boys from all groups of society in order to deliver an inclusive HMA response.'

In its extension request, **Mauritania** affirms that inclusivity, gender sensitivity, and diversity are integral to its mine action programme. It will engage all segments of the population, including men, women, boys, and girls, during the design and implementation of all activities and will strive for gender balance and diverse survey and battlefield area clearance (BAC) teams, recognizing that attaining complete gender balance within the seconded staff from the Corps of Engineers might present certain limitations. In 2024, two women were deployed in the field: one as a nurse and the other in logistical support. We encourage the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD) to consider developing a dedicated gender and diversity policy and implementation plan to further strengthen gender mainstreaming in Mauritania's mine action programme.

Somalia reports that its national mine action office follows a gender responsive approach, with a dedicated Gender Diversity and Inclusion officer ensuring that Gender and Diversity is considered by implementing partners. The Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) has actively advocated for gender and diversity inclusion within survey and community liaison teams. SEMA recognises, However, challenges remain in achieving full gender mainstreaming, particularly given Somalia's patriarchal society and the significant role of clan affiliation, which must be carefully considered. The National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 included provisions on gender and diversity, and a new strategy is being developed in 2025 with support from GICHD. We look forward to seeing gender and diversity firmly embedded in this updated strategy.

While all five requests reference gender and diversity—few included practical examples of initiatives to mainstream gender and diversity across national mine action programmes, such as the gender forum in Lebanon, led by LMAC, which has led to the revision of NMAS to include a gender component and which has driven NGOs in Lebanon to work towards including persons with disabilities into their activities. Several trainings, workshops, and discussions with women working in demining were also conducted through the forum. We encourage affected States to provide more comprehensive information on such initiatives in their extension requests and Article 7 reporting, both to reflect ongoing progress and provide valuable examples of good practice to other affected States.

Lastly, on the 25th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Women Peace and Security Agenda, we would like to encourage all States Parties to integrate mine action strategies within their WPS action plans.

Thank you.