



CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF DEADLINE PRESCRIBED IN ARTICLE 4(1)



STATE PARTY: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

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Executive Summary

Mauritania signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) on 19 April 2010, ratified it on 1 February 2012, and the Convention entered into force for Mauritania on 1 August 2012. Mauritania is already compliant with Article 3 of the CCM, having never used, stockpiled or transferred cluster type munitions. Compliance with Article 4 of the Convention was declared in September 2014 after all previously known cluster munitions strike sites were cleared in the country.

Mauritania reported in its CCM Article 7 transparency report covering 2019 that it had discovered previously unknown cluster munition-contaminated areas under its jurisdiction or control that will now require additional clearance work.

An initial assessment of these newly identified areas was conducted in February of 2021. The current estimate of the remaining cluster munition contamination is 14,017,596 square meters connected to 9 different/newly identified locations. The 14,017,596 square meters of newly identified cluster munition contamination is located in the far north of the country in the Tiris Zemor region (see more detailed breakdown and map below). All identified cluster munition contaminated areas are clearly under Mauritania's jurisdiction and control and thus need to be addressed under article 4 of the CCM.

Duration of the Proposed Extension

Current Article 4 Deadline: 1 August 2022

Length of Extension Period Requested: 2 years

New Extended Article 4 Deadline Requested: 1 August 2024

Risks:

- Inability to Mobilize Sufficient Resources to Complete Activities
- Lack of National Political Will and International Support
- Change in the current security situation limiting access to contaminated areas
- Continued impact of the global pandemic

Assumptions:

- Current Estimates of Contamination Remain the Same (no or limited additional areas are identified during further survey and clearance work).
- Development of national capacity to deal with any additional / future identified residual risk.

1. Background

The contamination in the north of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania by cluster munitions, is due to its involvement in the Western Sahara conflict of 1976-1978, which was marked by the use of a significant number of cluster munitions, usually in a haphazard manner. After completing non-technical survey and technical survey work in 2012

Forty- three years after the war, cluster munitions, continue to kill and maim populations, halt development in northern Mauritania and suspend economic activities such as: grazing, mining exploration, tourism, and trade.

In order to address the contamination that remains in Mauritania after the conflict, the National Humanitarian Demining Program for Development (PNDHD) was established in 2000 by the government of Mauritania. The PNDHD is a governmental institution under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization. It is monitored by an inter-ministerial steering committee. The PNDHD is the body responsible for the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and therefore coordinates all actions in this area.

2. Previous Clearance Activities

In 2012 and 2013, in accordance with Article 4 (1) of the international Convention on Cluster Munitions, Mauritania conducted technical survey and clearance activities of all then currently know cluster munition contaminated areas.

With the support of the international community, in particular Norway, a total area of **1,964,740 m²** was cleared and **1,246 cluster munitions** were destroyed. An initial Non-Technical Survey was conducted in 2012 which identified an initial 10 million square meters of suspected contaminated area. In 2013, further Technical Survey was conducted to confirm the extent of the suspected hazardous areas and reduce areas that did not need to be cleared. A confirmed area of just under 2 million square meters was identified for further clearance work that was subsequently cleared using battle area clearance methodologies in 2013. See more details in the table below of the initially estimated areas of contamination (SHA) submitted in 2012 followed by the exact areas (CHA) that were subjected to the final clearance work after further technical survey. Mauritania subsequently reported to have fulfilled its obligations under Article 4(1) on 9 September 2014 during the Fifth Meeting of States Parties after completing this initial work.

Table 1: Areas of cluster munition contamination initially reported and subsequently cleared since the convention entered into force for Mauritania

	NAME OF AREA	Initial 2012 SHA Size	2013 CHA Size / Cleared	BLU 63	MK118	M42
1.	AYDIYATT	n/a	150,108		6	
2.	AGHWACHIN	1,000,000	351,293	28		
3.	DOUEIK	1,200,000	258,982			347
4.	OUDEYATT BOUZEYAN	1,200,000	312,624	21		23
5.	WINIGHET	1,000,000	106,595		1	
6.	BIR MARIAM	1,250,000	169,400	48		
7.	OUM DBEIATT	1,000,000	33,572	200		
8.	TIGERT	1,500,000	305,212		91	
9.	GHARET EL HEMAID	1,850,000	276,954		481	
	TOTAL AREA	10,000,000	1,964,740	297	579	370
Total CMs					1,246	

3. Newly Identified / Currently Remining Areas to be Cleared

In the far northern part of the country (very remote area) some additional cluster munition contamination has been found. These areas were registered / reported by PNDHD in 2019. The cluster munition contamination resulted from the use of MK118 and BLU-63 cluster munitions.

Map of Cluster munition areas remaining in Mauritania

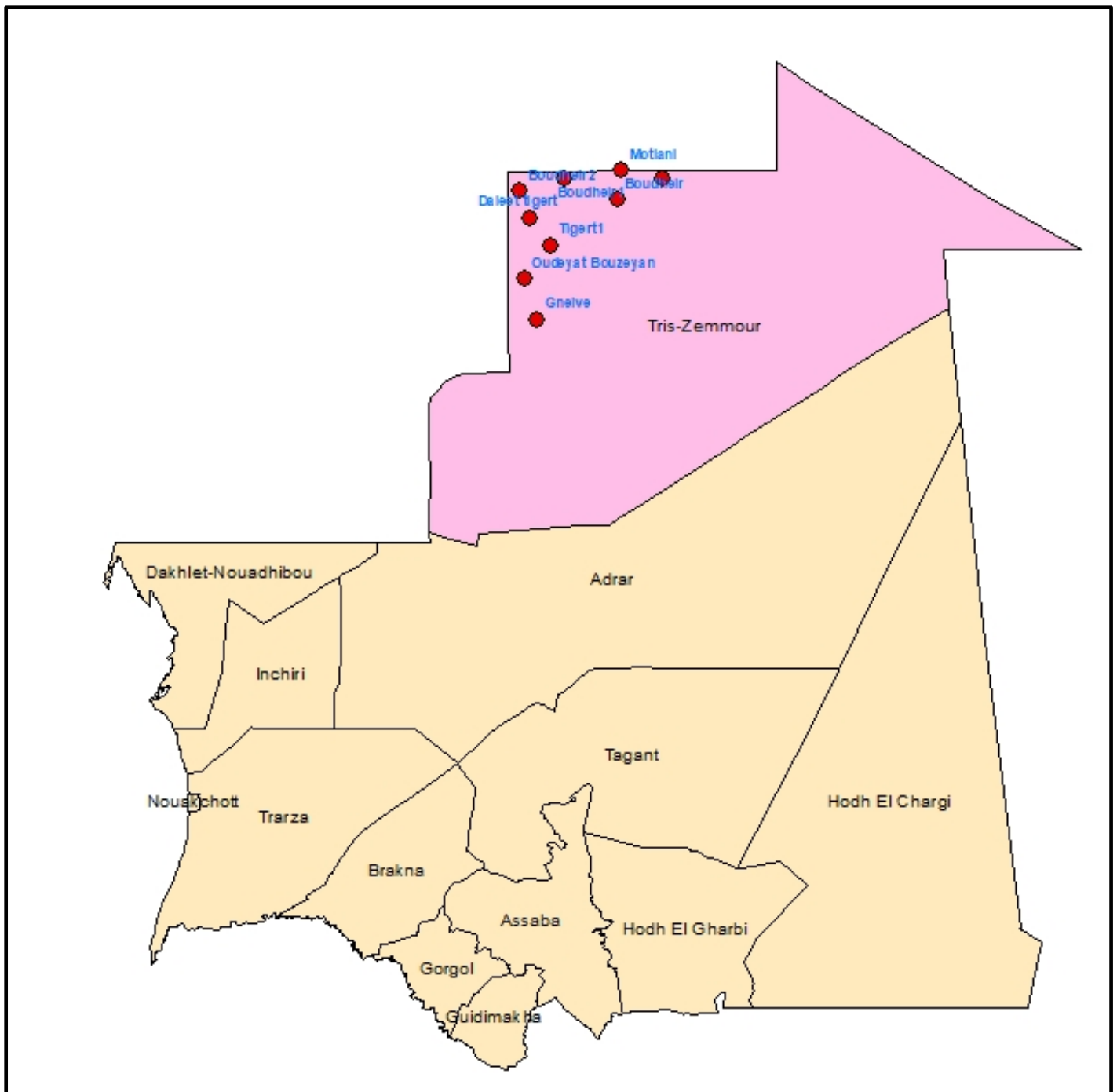


Table 2: Summary of Newly Identified Cluster Munition Contaminated Areas in Tiris Zemour

#	Task / PNDHD ID	Size (m2)	Type of Contamination	Location
1	Boudheir	20,556	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
2	Boudheir1	38,667	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
3	Boudheir2	243,147	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
4	Dalet tigert	345,703	MK118	Tiris Zemour
5	Gneive	4,683,196	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
6	Lemriere	2,587,276	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
7	Motlani	120,365	Blu63	Tiris Zemour
8	Oudeyat Lekhyame	5,326,856	MK118	Tiris Zemour
9	Tigert	651,830	MK118	Tiris Zemour
	Total	14,017,596		

**Note: A website has been developed by PNDHD that contains more information about the location and details of these hazardous areas identified.*

The presence of cluster munition contamination has been visually confirmed in all of these areas (direct evidence) however further technical survey work will be necessary in order to confirm the exact size of these areas (with the possibility for some reduction during the course of further survey followed by clearance work).

4. Proposed Work Plan

Mauritania is requesting an extension period of two years in order to complete clearance of the newly identified cluster munition contamination.

It is estimated that an initial period of six months will be needed to complete the mobilization process. This includes the identification of funding, staffing, equipment and other resources needed in order to deploy four BAC teams to address the remaining amount of contamination.

Once these four teams have been deployed, if the estimated amount of contamination remains the same, it will be possible to complete additional technical survey and clearance of the areas identified in a period of one year. A more detailed working plan that includes the estimated time required for each task/location identified can be found below including the assumptions made to make the calculation. These assumptions are also based on previous experience working in Mauritania.

An additional six-month period will then be allocated to address any additional contamination that might be found in the process. This time will also be used to finalize

reporting and documentation of the clearance activities before it will be necessary to submit the final completion reporting.

Clearance operations in Mauritania are based on Mauritanian Standards of Antimine Action (NMAM) which are in conformity with the IMAS, but are adapted to Mauritanian realities in terms of geography and equipment.

The NMAMs and were approved by the PNDHD and then submitted to the Government for approval in 2007. They are updated annually based on experiences in the field.

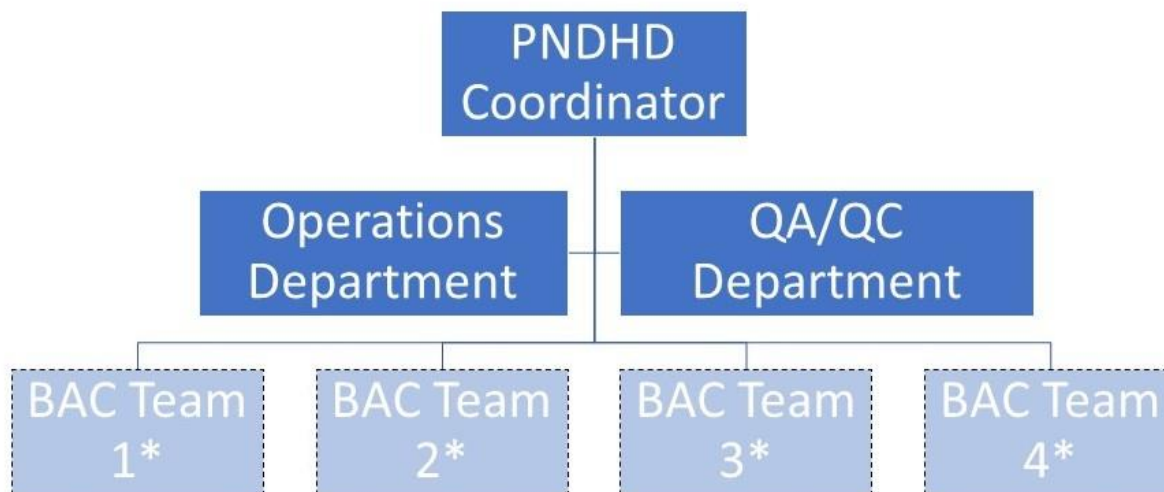
Timeline for the Release of the Remining Contaminated Areas

#	Task / PNDHD ID	Square Meters	Type of Contamination	Location	Total Working Days
1	Boudheir	20,556	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	2
2	Boudheir1	38,667	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	2
3	Boudheir2	243,147	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	6
4	Dalet tigert	345,703	MK118	Tiris Zemour	7
5	Gneive	4,683,196	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	80
6	Lemriere	2,587,276	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	45
7	Motlani	120,365	Blu63	Tiris Zemour	4
8	Oudeyat Lekhyame	5,326,856	MK118	Tiris Zemour	90
9	Tigert	651,830	MK118	Tiris Zemour	12
	Total	14,017,596			1 Year

The calculations of the estimated time line above is based on the following assumptions:

- Total working teams: 4
- Clearance rate per team per day = 15,000 square meters
- Total working days per year = 250 days

PNDHD Organogram



*BAC teams to be mobilized in order to address newly identified contamination

5. Rationale and Resource Mobilization Plan

The support of both bilateral and multilateral partners will be invaluable for Mauritania to guarantee the implementation of Article 4 of the Convention and reach completion.

The total budget for the planned activities is in the order of \$ 1,800,000 USD, including \$250,000 provided by the PNDHD of the national budget over the two-year period and \$1,550,000 remaining to be mobilized from external sources.

Mauritania does not have a lot of resources, but does have the political will and the desire to contribute financially and in kind towards the cost of the program.

The contribution that the Mauritanian government has provided, through the PNDHD, since the start of the cluster munitions clearance is as follows: provision of clearance teams and their expertise, support for deminers, installation of work equipment, support vehicles, the establishment of regional offices, victim assistance and logistical support commensurate with availability and capacity.

Mauritania is seeking the support of the international community in order to be able to complete its article 4 CCM obligations. Based on the success of the model with other country programs, Mauritania would like to form a Country Coalition between the government of Mauritania, a willing donor government, and a willing international mine action NGO who would be willing to assist with this completion initiative.

International Assistance requested:

In order to complete the survey and clearance work of the initially identified cluster munitions sites in the timeframe outlined, a total of 1,550,000 USD would be required from external sources. An initial investment of 400,000 USD would be needed for equipment and then an additional 1,150,000 for staff and other running costs. This is the amount that the government of Mauritania and the PNDHD would be seeking to fundraise with the assistance of the international mine action community.

A more detailed budget is as follows:

Resources Needed to Address Remaining Cluster Munition Contaminated Areas

Line Item	Amount (USD)
Vehicles	190,000
Detectors	120,000
Personal Protection Equipment & Uniforms	40,000
Camping Equipment and other Field Equipment	50,000
Total Equipment Costs	400,000
Operational Staff Costs	550,000
Operational Running Costs	450,000
Overhead Costs	150,000
Total Running Costs	1,150,000
Total Resources to Mobilize from the International Community	1,550,000
Mauritania Governmental Contribution	250,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	1,800,000

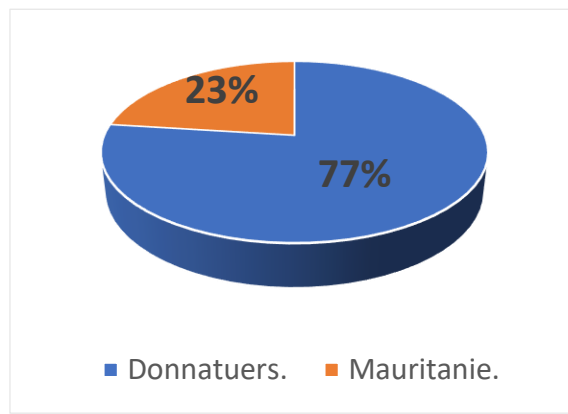
Governmental Contribution

The government of Mauritania will provide the project with several building and local staff to facilitate the expansion of the project, the majority of these staff members will be drawn in kind from the Corps of Engineers, and will only be paid a daily per-diem. The corps of engineers will also support the deployment of the teams to remote areas by providing trucking services for fuel and water that will be needed in the far northern part of the country.

The staff of the PNDHD will all work to support this initiative, and office space is also provided. The PNDHD will be responsible to facilitate the smooth implementation of this project including the liaison work with national and local governmental and military officials.

Mauritania will take initial steps to mobilize resources for its cluster munitions clearance programme, including the following:

- Mauritania, will present its request for extension at this year's 2021 Intersessional Meetings, providing information on the gaps for implementation
- Mauritania will continue outreach to international partners and States parties in a position to provide assistance to support Mauritanian's cluster munition clearance activities;
- Mauritania will reach out to partners with representation in Mauritania and invite them to participate in a briefing on Mauritania's humanitarian demining programme;
- Mauritania will continue to provide information on the status of implementation through its national website and country page on the convention's website;
- Mauritania will continue to provide updates on implementation at informal and formal meetings of the Convention as well through its Transparency Reports.



6. Justification of the Need for an Extended Timeframe

Mauritania initially formally declared completion in 2014, but then previously unknown cluster munition contamination was subsequently discovered in the far north of the country. As the newly identified contamination was only newly reported in 2019, it will not possible to address the full extent of this contamination by Mauritania's original Article 4 deadline of 1 August 2022.

It has taken some time in 2020 and 2021 to complete the initial survey work to come up with a rough estimate of the contamination remaining. The joint assessment mission conducted by PNDHD and NPA of the newly discovered CM contamination was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but took place in March 2021.

Mauritania still needs to secure international assistance for the clearance of the CM contamination. It will take some additional time to mobilize the support of the international mine action community in order to proceed with further technical survey and clearance work of the identified areas. Therefore, Mauritania does not foresee that it will be possible to complete clearance before its CCM deadline of 1 August 2022.

7. Further Residual Risk

In an area as large as the deserts of northern Mauritania, with both vast areas and very limited population numbers, it has always been known that in the future additional previously unknown contamination would and might still be found again. A discussion should be had around the idea of to what extent this contamination will be considered as a residual risk issue. Even when the newly identified areas are cleared this time, it is still possible that new currently unknown areas of cluster munition contamination may pop up in the future. Future residual risk will be dealt with by the Corps of Engineers, and the PNDHD will continue to build the capacity of this national body in order to be able to address and further contamination that may surface after completion of these currently identified cluster munitions tasks.

Mauritania will continue to strengthen and maintain a capacity in country that is equipped to deal with residual risk. In the event that areas previously unknown to have been contaminated by cluster munitions are identified after the newly proposed deadline, Mauritania will as soon as possible take action to accurately identify the extent of the contaminated areas identified and destroy all cluster munitions found in those areas in accordance with international and national standards. Mauritania will also report any additionally identified contaminated areas in accordance with its obligations under article 7

of the Convention and to share any relevant information with stakeholders and States parties through other formal and informal means.

8. Humanitarian, social, economic and environmental implications of the proposed extension

The impact of cluster munition contamination in Mauritania is predominantly social and economic, blocking access to pasture and other community resources and occasionally killing livestock. Human accidents also continue to occur, with a number of injuries occurring between 2009-2021. The majority of land when released is used for pasture by nomads and semi-nomadic communities. Considerable areas in Mauritania are known to be rich in mineral deposits and as such may be developed once the clearance process has been completed.

Clearance operations that were already carried out allowed the creation of an environment that enables socio-economic development in the province that was initially affected. This includes free movement of nomads to access grazing, significant decrease in accidents due to the contamination and the extension of mining research.

Action Plan for the proposed extension period 1 August 2022 to 1 August 2024*

Activities	Period	Aug - Dec. 2022	Jan - Dec. 2023	Jan - July 2024
Resource Mobilization / Identification of country coalition partners.	August - December 2022	X		
Conducting further of non-technical and technical survey		X		
Strengthening of the PNDHD's capacities & initial staff training		X		
-Conduct of additional non-technical and technical surveys		X	X	
Planning for establishment of residual risk capacity after clearance is complete		X	X	
Staff Recruitment, Training and Deployment of four clearance teams	January 2023		X	
Further Survey and Clearance of all identified cluster munition contaminated areas (as per work plan / estimates established above)	February - December 2024		X	
Quality Assurance and Quality Control Activities			X	X
Establishment of Capacity to address residual risk	January - August 2024			X
Additional buffer of time to address any contamination not initially identified in 2021				X
Finalization of database, reporting and documentation of results				X

* Note: the timing proposed above is initially dependent on how long it takes to identify the necessary resources during the resource mobilization period. This includes, funding, staff, equipment and technical advisory support.

ANNEX 1: Photos of Cluster Munitions from Identified Contaminated Areas.



Boudheir : Moughtaa de Bir Ougrein (Tiris Zémour)



Matlani :Moughataa de Bir Oumgrein(Tiris Zémour)



OudeyatLekhyame:Moughataa de Bir Oumgrein(Tiris Zemour



Tigert: Moughataa de Bir Oumgrein (Tiris Zemour)