

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 APRIL 2027
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM
NATIONAL AUTHORITY PARTIAL ESTIMATE*

13.33 km²

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2023

0.01 km²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2022

5

* This figure does not include 21 hazardous areas confirmed by the National Mine Action Centre in the first three months of 2023, not all of which contain AP mines.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT

Category	2022 (km²)	2023 (km²)
Clearance	0.08	0.01
Technical Survey	0.01	0.00
Non-Technical Survey	0.01	0.00

CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): NONE

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The conflict that started in Khartoum on 15 April 2023 between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) escalated in 2024.¹ Both sides have used explosive weapons delivered by tanks, artillery, and rockets, and the SAF has also air-dropped munitions.² Sudan has alleged that the RSF has laid mines during the hostilities, and open sources potentially indicate new anti-personnel (AP) mine contamination, although as at August 2024, this had not been independently verified. The functioning of the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) and the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) were disrupted by the fighting. Both have since established offices in government-controlled Port Sudan.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Recorded AP contamination was higher in Sudan at the end of 2022 (the last date for which comprehensive data was available) than at the end of 2018, increasing to 13.33km² from an estimated 10km². Although Sudan exceeded its land release targets in 2019, and there has been some evidence of improvements in the targeting of clearance in the intervening years, the area of AP contamination cleared annually has generally decreased. Insecurity, inadequate funding, insufficient demining equipment, newly discovered contamination, and climatic factors and geographical conditions have all impeded clearance efforts. In its third Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in 2022, Sudan outlined an ambitious work plan that was overtaken by the April 2023 conflict, which brought survey and clearance to a standstill for over a year and has possibly resulted in a greater extent of mined area.

1 ACLED, "One Year of War in Sudan", 14 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3V1QJZU>.

2 Human Rights Watch, "Sudan: Explosive Weapons Harming Civilians", 4 May 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4fs4D04p>.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- As soon as circumstances permit, Sudan should finalise and issue a new strategic plan, taking into account the impact of the conflict that started in April 2023.
- Resurvey of suspected contaminated areas from the conflict should be conducted as soon as possible.
- Sudan should only clear land where there is firm evidence of mines and it should continue to improve land release practices to ensure more targeted and efficient clearance.
- Sudan should develop a resource mobilisation strategy increasing its international advocacy to attract new and former donors.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	7	Sudan initiated non-technical survey (NTS) towards the end of 2019 to establish a national baseline of AP mined area. Although completion was planned by the end of 2021, insecurity and lack of access have proved major impediments, with most of the affected communities in areas that remained inaccessible. As a result of the conflict, resurvey will be needed of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) when access is possible.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	8	Sudan's national mine action programme is entirely nationally owned. It has benefitted from experienced NMAC staff and national mine action operators. NMAC coordinates and receives input on Article 5 implementation with operators and other stakeholders, though the conflict of 2023 continues to interrupt normal activities. The government funded mine action at US\$2 million annually for several years but this fell to US\$500,000 in 2021, following the devaluation of its currency. The situation in 2023 is not known. Sudan projected that \$32.6 million was required for land release from 2022 to 2027, but this will have to be reviewed in the light of the conflict and when circumstances permit.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	7	7	A new gender and diversity policy was developed and endorsed in 2021 and gender is said to be mainstreamed in the national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 (which was never formally adopted) and in the national mine action standards. Emphasis is placed on gender-balanced survey teams and the employment of women in the programme. Sudan does acknowledge difficulties in employing women in operational roles due to local customs and traditions. In 2021, 30% of managerial staff in NMAC were women, but the corresponding figure for operational roles was only 20%.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	4	Not Scored	In 2022, NMAC reported having a policy on environmental management, which included information on how mine action operators should minimise potential harm from demining activities. Dedicated NMAS on environmental management and environmental impact assessment, were due to be implemented in 2022 but it is not known whether this occurred.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	7	The process of upgrading Sudan's Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) was ongoing, with data migration to IMSMA Core having begun in 2022. Sudan had until 2022 submitted timely Article 7 reports, and provides regular updates on progress in Article 5 implementation at the annual meetings of States Parties. In April 2022, Sudan submitted a detailed Article 5 deadline extension request through to 1 April 2027, which was revised in August 2022 and granted in November 2022. Sudan did not officially submit its Article 7 transparency report covering 2022, but provided a draft copy to Mine Action Review. As at August 2024, Sudan had not submitted an Article 7 report covering 2023.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	7	A new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 was finalised but never formally adopted. Sudan provided a two-phase work plan in its 2022 Article 5 deadline extension request, with disaggregated annual targets for release of mined area. In the remaining period of the last extension request to 1 April 2023, Sudan aimed to complete its Article 5 commitments in West Kordofan state, in one locality in Blue Nile state and in one locality in South Kordofan state, but land release data for 2022 indicated these aims were not achieved.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	7	7	Sudan revised its NMAS in 2021 and in 2022 reported that it had 26 national standards. In 2021, the Sudanese Regional Training Center was established to deliver mine action training to the Sudan programme. The current status of land release approaches was not known.

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	6	There was a decrease in overall land release in 2023 due to the conflict which brought land release activities to a halt in April 2023. Completion of clearance by the new Article 5 deadline of 1 April 2027 is highly unlikely given the ongoing conflict.
Average Score	***5.9	6.9	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

* New criterion introduced in 2024 to assess performance.

** The weighting of this criterion was previously 20% of overall score for performance, but is now given a 10% weighting.

*** This is a nominal score given the armed conflict that has been ongoing since April 2023, which has brought the national mine action programme to a standstill.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)
- Sudan National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD)
- JASMAR for Human Security
- Global Aid Hand

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- SafeLane Global (SLG)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC), which achieved organisational accreditation in 2021 and operational accreditation in 2023.

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2022, the last time comprehensive contamination data were available, Sudan reported the total area suspected or confirmed to contain AP mines as 13.33km².³ NMAC and UNMAS lost access to the mine action database when the conflict broke out in April 2023, and at the time of writing, were still trying to retrieve data (see section below, National Ownership and Programme Management, for details).⁴

In the first three months of 2023, before the war broke out, NMAC newly identified 21 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) that were entered into the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). These included a mix of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) with disaggregated data not available. NMAC also reported that 6,110m² of AP mined area was released through clearance during this period. No survey or clearance has taken place since the conflict broke out.⁵ Given the lack of access to the IMSMA database, it is not possible to provide an updated overview of the AP mined area by state for 2023 but given the above, it is expected to be similar to that reported in 2022 report (as shown in Table 1). Possible new contamination, although not surveyed, has been recorded and plotted on heat maps awaiting confirmation before data entry.⁶

Table 1: AP mined area by state (at end 2022)⁷

State	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHAs/CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Blue Nile	10	1,006,217	9	118,432	19	1,124,649
South Kordofan	56	2,362,947	30	9,822,666	86	12,185,613
West Kordofan	0	0	3	21,991	3	21,991
Totals	66	3,369,164	42	9,963,089	108	13,332,253

In addition to AP mined area, Sudan is also contaminated with anti-vehicle (AV) mines. At the end of 2021, 13.54km² of AV mined area across 29 SHAs covered 11.61km² along with 22 CHAs covering 1.93km² (see Table 2).⁸ The extent of AV mine contamination today is not known.

3 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C.

4 Interview with Robert Thompson, Head of Project Unit (HPU)/Chief of Operations (COO), UNMAS, Geneva, 1 May 2024; and emails from Thomas Xavier, Information Management Officer, UNMAS Sudan, 13 May 2024; and Khalid Hamdan Adam, Director General, NMAC, of 14 May and 7 August 2024.

5 Data provided by email from Sediq Rashid, Chief of Mine Action, UNMAS, 16 July 2024.

6 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024; and Sediq Rashid, UNMAS, 16 July 2024.

7 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C.

8 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, Technical Adviser, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

Table 2: AV mined area (at end 2021)⁹

CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m ²)
22	1,933,503	29	11,606,334	51	13,539,837

* No updated AV mine contamination data was available for 2022.

Sudan's mine and ERW contamination results from decades-long conflict since the country's independence in 1956. Twenty years of civil war, during which mines and other munitions were widely used by all parties to the conflicts, resulted in widespread contamination that has claimed thousands of victims.¹⁰ In January 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ostensibly ended the civil war. A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted in 2007–09 covering Blue Nile, Gedaref, Kassala, Red Sea, and South Kordofan states, before armed conflict erupted again in 2011, which continued until 2016. More contaminated areas, including with AP mines, were expected to be found as a result.

There have been "ad hoc" reports of additional mined and ERW-contaminated areas being registered as "dangerous areas" in the national database. This has caused the LIS baseline of 221 hazards to expand significantly, including by encompassing areas not originally surveyed.¹¹ Sudan claimed in August 2022 that mines were still being laid by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA),¹² although this has not been independently reported or verified. Sudan has also asserted that the RSF has laid mines since the conflict broke out in April 2023,¹³ and there have been other reports that landmines have been used,¹⁴ but this had not been independently verified as at June 2024.

NMAC has previously reported that significant survey was required to more accurately determine the actual extent of AP mined area in Sudan.¹⁵ NMAC initiated non-technical

survey (NTS) in November 2019, across Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and West Kordofan states, and the five federal Darfur states to establish evidence-based, accurate baselines of contamination for all explosive ordnance (EO).¹⁶ NMAC had planned to complete all necessary survey by the end of 2021, but insecurity and lack of access impeded this, with most known affected communities in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Jebel Marra in Darfur still inaccessible.¹⁷ It was expected that when further survey became possible, additional contaminated areas would be identified, while some areas previously identified as contaminated by the LIS would be cancelled.¹⁸ In 2022, access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile states did improve, and many roads were reported as verified or cleared and opened for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and allowing access for local communities.¹⁹ But Sudan also reported that insecurity had prevented the survey from covering all localities and villages.²⁰

ABYEI (REGION WHOSE SOVEREIGNTY IS CONTESTED WITH SOUTH SUDAN)

Since 2011, the status of Abyei has been a contentious issue between Sudan and South Sudan.²¹ In the disputed area (known as the "Abyei Box") and the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ) between Sudan and South Sudan, the extent of mine and ERW contamination is unknown as a result of security and political issues.²² In 2023, 599,957m² of AP mined area was cleared in Abyei while 436,474m² was added to the database – SHA defined from previous data on the presence of AP mines.²³

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Sudan also has a significant problem with ERW, including limited contamination from cluster munition remnants (CMR), primarily as a result of the long civil war that led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 and South Sudan's independence in July 2011 (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2024* report on Sudan for further information on CMR contamination). ERW was estimated to cover a total of nearly 6.11km² across 99 CHAs and 98 SHAs in 2022.²⁴ This contributed to the total EO-contaminated area to be cleared, which in 2022 was estimated at 32.91km² across 182 CHAs and 169 SHAs.²⁵ The conflict that started in April 2023 has certainly added ERW contamination, particularly in urban areas.²⁶

9 Ibid.

10 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, Chief of Operations, NMAC, 9 May 2016.

11 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary, pp. 2–3.

12 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 71.

13 Statement of Sudan on Cooperative Compliance, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

14 "Sudan conflict raises familiar specter of a landmine-contaminated wasteland", *Arab News*, 31 January 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3VIOxqH>; James Madison University, "Growing Threat of Landmines in Sudan Amid Ongoing Conflict", 3 February 2024, accessed 14 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4aXC7AN>.

15 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

16 Ibid.; and Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 17.

17 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

18 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

19 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

20 Ibid., p. 41.

21 United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), "Abyei", at: <https://bit.ly/3VGdLai>.

22 UNMAS, "2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan".

23 Email from Jes Luckett, Chief of Mine Action, UNMAS UNISFA, 25 April 2024.

24 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.

25 Ibid., p. 7.

26 "Unexploded weapons in cities create new danger zone in Sudan", *UN News*, 4 May 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4clytSk>.

While no mines had been found in Darfur prior to the 2023 conflict, ERW there include unexploded air-dropped bombs, rockets, artillery and mortar shells, and grenades.²⁷ Of the 63 localities (administrative units) in the five states of Darfur, 44 had been assessed and released by the United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) Ordnance Disposal Office by July 2022, leaving 19 to be assessed.²⁸ However, intercommunal conflict, reported in 2022, was said to have led to new ERW contamination in some localities.²⁹ At the end of February 2022, following a deterioration in security after UNAMID's withdrawal, survey and clearance

operations were suspended.³⁰ The ongoing conflict since April 2023 will have added ERW contamination in Darfur.

ABYEI

In 2023, inter-tribal fighting and the involvement of the armed forces within the Abyei Box led to increased ERW contamination (mostly of unexploded rocket-propelled and hand grenades) around the central and southern parts of Abyei.³¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and NMAC manage Sudan's mine action programme. Following the independence of South Sudan, NMAC assumed full ownership of national mine action in Sudan, with responsibility for coordinating and supervising the implementation of all mine action, including quality assurance (QA), accreditation, and certification of clearance operators. The 2010 Mine Action Act is Sudan's national mine action legislation. A chapter of the law covers Sudan's APMBC obligations, including clearance of mined areas and reporting, and lays down penalties for those who work in mine action without first obtaining a licence from NMAC.³²

Between January 2021 and its closure in February 2024, UNMAS supported the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) established in June 2020, providing mine action services as part of the mission's mandate. UNMAS has provided organisational and individual capacity development to NMAC, including training.³³ With the closure of UNAMID in 2020, UNMAS took over responsibility for the ERW response in Darfur from UNAMID's Ordnance Disposal Office (ODO).³⁴

The April 2023 conflict scattered NMAC staff and its Khartoum offices were looted, but by April 2024, NMAC had set up an office in Port Sudan.³⁵ UNMAS, which had been based in the same building as NMAC in Khartoum, withdrew its international staff from Sudan in April 2023, but

subsequently set up an office in Port Sudan in July 2023.³⁶ All operations were suspended, although UNMAS sub-offices in Damazin in Blue Nile state, and in Kadugli in South Kordofan state, remained open throughout.³⁷ Neither NMAC or UNMAS had access to the mine action database for a year, until April 2024, when access was restored albeit with the possibility that some data had been lost.³⁸ Mine survey and clearance operations all but ceased from April 2023, except for a few small-scale activities, mainly NTS by Danish Refugee Council (DRC). (See the section below, Operators and Operational Tools, for details.)³⁹

NMAC, operating from Port Sudan since April 2024, lacks personnel, equipment, office space and an operating budget to operate at its pre-conflict capacity. NMAC is supporting accreditation and will need support to reorient efforts to expand the humanitarian mine action response given the large-scale increase in EO contamination.⁴⁰ Building reliable and sustainable local capacity had been a key focus for NMAC,⁴¹ and in 2021, Sudan set up the Regional Training Center in Khartoum.⁴²

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has also supported NMAC, including with training, and has provided remote support for the implementation of IMSMA Core since 2021. The GICHD lost contact with NMAC after the conflict broke out in April 2023, and IMSMA Core implementation has been on standby since then.⁴³

27 UNMAS, "2018 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan".

28 Email from Aimal Safi, Senior Operations and QM Advisor, UNMAS, 7 July 2022.

29 Ibid.

30 Emails from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 27 March and 7 July 2022.

31 Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 25 April 2024.

32 GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Sudan", March 2012; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.

33 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.

34 UNMAS Sudan webpages, accessed 9 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/43Shldk>.

35 Interview with Khalid Hamdan Adam, NMAC, in Geneva, 30 April 2024.

36 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS; and Matt Williams, Senior Programme Officer, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

37 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

38 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNITAMS, 5 and 18 May 2023; and interview (as UNMAS Sudan), in Geneva, 1 May 2024; and email from Khalid Hamdan Adam, NMAC, 14 May 2024.

39 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

40 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

41 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 41.

42 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

43 Email from Henrik Rydberg, Country Focal Point, GICHD, 8 August 2023.

Until the outbreak of the conflict in 2023, the government of Sudan had maintained a consistent level of national funding for mine action in local currency for several years, but due to the devaluation of the local currency against the US dollar, this had fallen from \$2 million worth of funding in 2019 and 2020 to only \$500,000 in 2021 and 2022. Sudan had calculated that it required \$32.6 million for all land release activities (not just AP mines) from 2022 to 2027. This works out at almost \$7 million per year for 2022 to 2025, \$3.5 million for 2026, and \$1.15 million for 2027. However, funding in 2022 fell far short of projected needs when Sudan received a total of \$1,942,634 for land release activities from various donors through UNMAS.⁴⁴ Sudan and UNMAS had been working on resource mobilisation and had managed to expand the donor pool,⁴⁵ and Sudan had encouraged international organisations and companies that wished to work in the field of mine action in Sudan.⁴⁶ As a result of the 2023 conflict, all plans and costings will have to be revisited when it is possible to do so.

The annual meeting of the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) was held on 14 March 2023 in Khartoum, chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan and Head of UNITAMS, the Ambassador of Italy (the Global MASG Chair for 2023), and the Secretary-General of

the Ministry of Defence. Key stakeholders, including donors, discussed the status, risks, challenges, and opportunities of Sudan's mine action efforts,⁴⁷ but the events of 15 April 2023 overtook any potential progress made.

ABYEI

The United Nations Interim Support for Abyei (UNISFA) does not have a mandate to conduct mine clearance, but UNMAS has continued its UN Security Council-mandated role in Abyei, which includes identification and clearance of mines and route assessment in the Safe Demilitarized Buffer Zone (SDBZ) between Sudan and South Sudan and Abyei. It operates through an implementing partner, The Development Initiative (TDI), and acts in support of peacekeeping operations, the delivery of humanitarian aid, the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the nomadic migration of animals. In 2023, UNMAS UNISFA discovered and added a total of 436,474m² AP mined area to the database.⁴⁸ UNMAS received funding of \$9.86 million for its activities in Abyei from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023,⁴⁹ a reduction on the \$10.54 million that UNMAS received from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.⁵⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

A new gender and diversity policy was developed and endorsed in 2021. Gender is mainstreamed in the draft national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 (never formally approved due to the outbreak of the conflict⁵¹) as well as in the NMAS for risk education, survey, clearance, and victim assistance.⁵² NMAC stated that, in line with the policy and the strategic plan, all survey and community liaison teams are to be gender balanced, and women and children must be consulted during survey and community liaison activities. Gender is also said to be considered in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance, as per the NMAS and the new standard IMSMA forms.⁵³

Before the 2023 conflict, NMAC reported that ethnic minority groups in affected communities were consulted during survey and considered during the planning of mine action activities. Survey teams are also structured to address all affected groups within a community, including ethnic minorities.⁵⁴ As part of the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and peacebuilding efforts, 21 ex-fighters from one of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North

(SPLM-N) factions, Malik Agar, located in the Bau/Ulu locality and Ingasana mountains, completed training in International Mine Action standards (IMAS) EOD [explosive ordnance disposal] Level 1 in 2021 and were integrated into land release operations in Ulu and Ingasana, which are heavily contaminated with mines and ERW.⁵⁵

NMAC says it always encourages women to apply for employment in the national programme, whether at the office level or in the field. In 2021, 30% of NMAC staff employed at the managerial or supervisory levels were women, as were 20% of staff in operational positions.⁵⁶ Data for 2022 or 2023 were not available. The first female deminer was employed in late 2019.⁵⁷ In 2021, a group of 28 women from different states and ethnic groups completed basic demining training. They were due to begin working within the different mine action operators by April 2023,⁵⁸ but it is not known whether this occurred. NMAC created a dedicated Gender Focal Point (GFP) who connected with other GFPs from the region to share experiences and good practice.⁵⁹

44 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

45 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8 and 30.

46 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F; and Statement of Sudan on Cooperative Compliance, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

47 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

48 Email from Jes Lockett, UNMAS UNISFA, 9 May 2024

49 Email from Jes Lockett, UNMAS UNISFA, 25 April 2024.

50 UNMAS, "Where we work: Abyei", accessed 30 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3waA8Fr>.

51 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

52 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 27 March 2022.

53 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

54 Ibid.

55 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 23.

56 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

57 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

58 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22.

59 Email from GICHD, 29 June 2021.

As at May 2024, UNMAS had 14 staff members working on its Sudan operation: ten men and four women.⁶⁰ This compares with the first quarter of 2022, when UNMAS Sudan had 16 staff members, of whom four programme officers and one support service employee were women. In addition, in 2022, within the national operators contracted by UNMAS, women were working in managerial positions and medics and community liaison officers in most of the field teams were female. UNMAS reported that, as at March 2022, around half the members of NTS teams were female.

ABYEI

In Abyei, UNMAS UNISFA implemented its Gender and Diversity Work Plan 2019–2023. The work plan focuses on the following strategic objectives: UNMAS field programmes are staffed by a diverse workforce whose retention is supported through professional development and an enabling environment; women and men, including under-represented groups, are equally represented in UNMAS field programme leadership roles; and the diversity of UNMAS field personnel is improved. Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by gender and age and UNMAS is an active participant in UNISFA's Gender and Diversity Working Group.⁶¹ In practice, however, only 9% of all operator staff are women as are 10% of managerial or supervisory staff, and there are no women in operational positions.

Table 3: Gender composition of operators in Abyei (at May 2024)⁶²

Organisation	Total staff	Women staff	Managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total operational staff	Women in operational positions
UNMAS UNISFA	15	6 (40%)	3	0 (0%)	3	0 (0%)
TDI	140	8 (6%)	17	2 (11%)	109	0 (0%)
Totals	155	14 (9%)	20	2 (10%)	112	0 (0%)

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

In 2022, Sudan reported having a policy on environmental management, which included information on how mine action operators should minimise potential harm from demining activities.⁶³ A dedicated national mine action standard (NMAS) on environmental management and environmental impact was due to be implemented in 2022,⁶⁴ although at the time of writing it was not known whether this had occurred.

ABYEI

UNMAS complies with UNISFA's environmental management policy, which is tailored to mine action in the UNISFA Mine Action Technical Standards and Guidelines (Chapter 16 Environmental, Health and Safety) and with IMAS 07.13 (on environmental management in mine action). UNMAS, in collaboration with the UNISFA Facilities and Environmental Management Unit, conducts environmental assessments to support the planning and delivery of survey and clearance tasks. Climate-related risks are taken into account when planning demining tasks, and are a daily consideration during the extreme heat of the dry season, which can cause exhaustion among personnel, and during the rainy season, which can cause the migration of mines.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

⁶¹ Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 9 May 2024.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

⁶⁴ Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 27 March 2022.

⁶⁵ Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 9 May 2024.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Neither NMAC nor UNMAS had access to the mine action database for about a year following the ransacking of their offices (co-located in Khartoum) in April 2023. In May 2024, UNMAS, NMAC, and GICHD (which hosts NMAC's data) were working to retrieve the data, though some may be lost forever.⁶⁶

Sudan had in the past submitted timely Article 7 reports and given regular statements on progress at meetings of States Parties to the APMBC. In April 2022, Sudan submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request to 1 April 2027, which it revised in August 2022. The extension request was comprehensive and of a good quality despite the ongoing challenges faced by the mine action programme. While Sudan provided its Article 7 report covering 2022 to Mine Action Review, it did not formally submit it to the United Nations for

publication. As at August 2024, Sudan had not yet submitted its Article 7 report in 2024 (covering 2023).

ABYEI

UNMAS UNISFA uses IMSMA Core, and employs an information management officer to monitor, verify, and evaluate the data entered on the database. UNMAS UNISFA sends monthly reports to NMAC Sudan that include information about hazardous areas identified.⁶⁷ In addition, UNMAS UNISFA provides monthly achievement reports to NMAC and to UNMAS Sudan. However, it is unclear whether NMAC Sudan enters the information into the IMSMA database due to the ongoing conflict. The complete UNMAS UNISFA database cannot be shared with NMAC due to compatibility issues.⁶⁸

PLANNING AND TASKING

In March 2022, NMAC reported that the new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 had been finalised but, as indicated above, was still awaiting approval.⁶⁹ In its revised 2022 Article 5 deadline extension request, Sudan said the strategy was being reviewed and aligned with the extension period, and that deadlines and strategic objectives were to be amended in consultation with stakeholders, with the updated strategy to be issued in February 2023.⁷⁰ However, the strategy was delayed and never finally approved due to the outbreak of the conflict.⁷¹ A final version of the strategy was, though, shared with stakeholders.⁷²

In November 2022, Sudan's request for a four-year extension to its Article 5 deadline was granted with the new deadline set at 1 April 2027. Sudan was asked to submit annual updates on progress and a detailed updated work plan by 30 April 2025 covering the remaining period of the extension. In its revised 2022 Article 5 deadline extension request, Sudan outlined a two-phase work plan, providing annual land release targets for all explosive ordnance to 2027.⁷³ In April 2023, just before the outbreak of hostilities, Sudan reported plans to undertake survey and assessment mainly in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Darfur states during the operational year 2023–24.⁷⁴ These plans have been blown off course by the 2023 conflict, and it is impossible to determine a clear date for Article 5

compliance given the lack of access to known contaminated areas and the need for extensive survey to determine any legacy or potentially new AP mine contamination.⁷⁵

Prior to the 2023 conflict, it was already unlikely that Sudan would meet its Article 5 deadline of 1 April 2027. Sudan had indicated that it aimed to improve its land release process and methodology and was planning to work with UNMAS and others to enhance its resource mobilisation strategy.⁷⁶ However, Sudan's plans under the extension request were based on the assumptions that there would be an improvement in the security situation in all regions contaminated by mines and ERW, and that the required funds would be secured to implement programme activities.⁷⁷ It acknowledged that it might need to request additional time and resources if the situation changed.⁷⁸

In 2021, a systematic prioritisation system was introduced as part of the new NMAC and linked with IMSMA with each SHA and CHA classified as high, medium, or low impact and prioritised accordingly.⁷⁹ There were agreed impact criteria at the national level while in the field, the sequence of addressing priority hazardous areas were decided in consultation with local stakeholders and communities, taking into account gender and diversity, and engaging

66 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 5 and 18 May 2023; and interview in Geneva, 1 May 2024; and emails from Thomas Xavier, UNMAS Sudan, 13 May 2024; and Khalid Hamdan Adam, NMAC, 14 May 2024.

67 Email from Johan Maree, Chief of Operations, UNMAS UNISFA, 27 July 2023.

68 Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 26 April 2024.

69 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

70 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20.

71 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

72 Email from UNMAS Headquarters, 24 July 2023.

73 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 48–58.

74 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

75 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

76 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 44–45.

77 Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

78 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 66.

79 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

the humanitarian and development sectors and local authorities. All previously identified hazardous areas were to be resurveyed through NTS, then TS and clearance as required.⁸⁰ It is not known whether Sudan will continue with the same system in the aftermath of the 2023 conflict.

UNMAS has indicated that its response to the April 2023 conflict involved expanding risk education for local populations and for humanitarian workers and support to NMAC to set up a hotline to receive reports of contamination and incidents, along with expanded technical analysis and mapping of explosive hazards for humanitarian access. Technical support will include UNMAS joining humanitarian assessment missions to survey high-priority areas.⁸¹ As at June 2024, UNMAS reported that no emergency clearance was underway despite the acute need, but it was hoped that, pending funding and access, clearance would resume and expand in 2024 and beyond.⁸² In June 2024, DRC reported it

had been allocated UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) funding until early January 2025 to work with national partner, JASMAR, to deploy six risk education teams in northern and eastern states of Sudan (Northern, River Nile, Red Sea, Kassala, and Gedaref). The project was to be managed from Port Sudan.⁸³

ABYEI

In 2023, UNMAS UNISFA continued to work on identified mined areas with an “integrated” approach.⁸⁴ There was a plan was to increase the daily clearance rate through using a newly contracted clearance/ground preparation machine (MW370).⁸⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In May 2021, NMAC reported that a review of Sudan's NMAS had been completed and the revised standards had been endorsed.⁸⁶ UNMAS was working with NMAC and national operators to develop their standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure they were compliant with the new NMAS.⁸⁷ No further developments have been reported.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

National operators active in mine action in Sudan in 2022 were JASMAR for Human Security (JASMAR), the National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD), and Global Aid Hand (GAH).⁸⁸ There were two international operators, SafeLane Global (SLG), which became operational in December 2020, and DRC, which was granted operational accreditation in January 2023.⁸⁹

In the first three months of 2023, JASMAR maintained a clearance capacity of four teams comprising 32 deminers, and four NTS teams comprising eight personnel (though they did not work exclusively on AP mines). After the outbreak of the conflict in mid-April 2023, there was no operational clearance capacity in Sudan for the remainder of the year,⁹⁰ though UNMAS sub-offices in Damazin in Blue Nile state and Kadugli in South Kordofan remained open.⁹¹

In February 2023, a DRC NTS team (comprising a male team leader, and one female and one male operator) were deployed to the Kadugli locality in a government-controlled area of South Kordofan state.⁹² In the two months to April 2023, the team registered areas surveyed, but after the conflict started, NTS focused on spot tasks. The team surveyed a total of 338,573m², identifying 40 hazards, between February 2023 and December 2023. No CMR or AP mines were discovered.⁹³ At the beginning of June 2023, DRC's mine action teams (two risk education teams, including one from its partner GAH, and one NTS team) continued their work in Kadugli with the approval of the local Humanitarian Aid Commission (the governmental body that manages and organises humanitarian work in Sudan) and NMAC. By mid-June 2023, however, the NMAC office in Kadugli had instructed DRC to suspend these operations due to insecurity.⁹⁴ Activities did, though, resume in August.

80 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 34 and 36; and draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F, pp. 16–17.

81 UNMAS Sudan webpages, accessed on 14 June at: <https://bit.ly/43Shldk>; and email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

82 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

83 Email from Johannes de Jager, DRC, 14 June 2024.

84 Email from Jes Lockett, UNMAS UNISFA, 26 April 2024.

85 Ibid.

86 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

87 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

88 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

89 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 45.

90 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024; and from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

91 Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

92 Email from Johannes de Jager, DRC, 28 February 2023.

93 Email from Johannes de Jager, DRC, 9 May 2024.

94 Emails from Johannes de Jager, DRC, 12 June and 26 June 2023.

In July 2023, the UNMAS Chief of Mine Action and the Head of Project Unit/Chief of Operations were deployed to the newly opened UNMAS office in Port Sudan, along with a small number of national staff. UNMAS set up a temporary office in Nairobi in early 2024 to support the Sudan operation remotely, and more UNMAS operational staff were to deploy to Port Sudan in May and June 2024 to support humanitarian operations.⁹⁵ UNMAS hopes that the number of mine action personnel would increase further in 2024, given the need to

respond to substantial EO contamination, including mines, both from the ongoing conflict and older conflicts.⁹⁶

ABYEI

TDI, an international commercial company, is the only organisation conducting survey and clearance of mines in Abyei. UNMAS UNISFA operates with integrated teams that have survey, community liaison, and clearance capacities.⁹⁷

Table 4: Operational NTS and TS capacities deployed in Abyei in 2023⁹⁸

Operator	NTS teams	NTS personnel	TS teams	Total TS personnel	Comments
TDI	2	20	2	20	NTS and TS activities are led by a technical field manager and a team leader. Each team can be split into two.
Totals	2	20	2	20	

Table 5: Mine clearance capacities deployed in Abyei in 2023⁹⁹

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers	Dog teams	Mechanical assets/machines	Comments
TDI	2	20	0	2	Each team can be split into two.
Totals	2	20	0	2	

In 2023, there was a reduction in team strength due to the removal of an integrated clearance team which had operated in 2022. No major change in survey or clearance personnel is anticipated in 2024.¹⁰⁰ UNMAS UNISFA contracted a heavy mine clearance/ground preparation machine (MW370) in 2023 to speed up clearance of suspected hazardous areas. The machine replaced one of two light-medium mine clearance/ground preparation machines (MW240). The aim was to increase daily clearance rate.¹⁰¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

Less than 0.01km² of AP mined area was reported as released in Sudan in 2023, all through clearance (which only took place until the conflict started on 15 April 2023).¹⁰² No information was available on whether any land was released through NTS in 2023, and no TS was conducted. Five AP mines were destroyed during clearance operations, along with 68 AV mines and 625 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO).¹⁰³ Twenty-one newly confirmed hazardous areas were added to the IMSMA database, but this is not disaggregated data that includes both mines and ERW.¹⁰⁴

ABYEI

In 2023, UNMAS UNISFA reported that just under 0.6km² of AP mined area was released through clearance in Abyei and one AP mine and one AV mine were destroyed. No hazardous area was released through survey. An additional 0.44km² of legacy contamination was added to the database.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁵ Email from Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 10 June 2024.

⁹⁶ Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024; and Matt Williams, UNMAS Sudan, 20 June 2024.

⁹⁷ Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 9 May 2024.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Email from Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 26 April 2024.

¹⁰² Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Email from Sediq Rashid, UNMAS, 16 July 2024.

¹⁰⁵ Emails from Johan Maree, UNMAS UNISFA, 27 July 2023; and Jes Luckett, UNMAS UNISFA, 26 April 2024.

SURVEY IN 2023

No information was available on hazardous area cancelled through NTS or reduced through TS in 2023, as at the time of writing. In 2022, JASMAR cancelled 6,283m² of hazardous area through NTS in Blue Nile state and reduced another 12,226m² through TS.¹⁰⁶

ABYEI

No AP mined area was reported as released in Abyei through NTS or TS in 2023 or 2022.¹⁰⁷

CLEARANCE IN 2023

In 2023, JASMAR cleared a total of 6,110m² of AP mined area in Blue Nile state, destroying in the process 5 AP mines, 68 AV mines, and 625 items of UXO.¹⁰⁸ The outbreak of the conflict on 15 April 2023, brought clearance operations to a halt, leading to a sharp overall reduction in AP mine clearance from 2022,¹⁰⁹ when JASMAR cleared 32,062m² of hazardous area in Blue Nile state and another 43,144m² in South Kordofan, and found and destroyed 32 AP mines and 14 AV mines. Another 31 AP mines were destroyed in 2022 in uncompleted tasks.¹¹⁰

Table 6: Mine clearance in Sudan in 2023¹¹¹

State	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Blue Nile	JASMAR	6,110	5	68	625
Totals		6,110	5	68	625

In 2023, as in 2022, no AP or AV mines were reported as destroyed in spot tasks.¹¹²

DEMINER SAFETY

The UNMAS and NMAC office was reported to have been damaged and looted early in the conflict and all the equipment was taken or destroyed.¹¹³ Partners have also lost equipment through looting.¹¹⁴

ABYEI

In Abyei, one hazardous area covering 599,957m² was cleared in 2023, with one AP mine and one AV mine destroyed. This is a huge increase on the 15,624m² of SHA that was cleared manually in 2022.¹¹⁵ Another 252,399m² of SHA was released through battle area clearance in 2022.¹¹⁶

Table 7: Mine clearance in Abyei in 2023¹¹⁷

Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
TDI	599,957	1	1	0
Totals	599,957	1	1	0

There were no reports of staff being killed or injured in Abyei as a result of demining accidents in 2023. There was, however, an attack on demining operation on 17 April 2024, when a vehicle belonging to TDI was hijacked by armed assailants. The vehicle was never recovered.

¹⁰⁶ Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F; and email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, UNITAMS, 10 July 2023.

¹⁰⁷ Email from Johan Maree, UNMAS UNISFA, 27 July 2023.

¹⁰⁸ Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Draft Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F; and email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, UNITAMS, 10 July 2023.

¹¹¹ Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024; and Sediq Rashid, UNMAS, 16 July 2024.

¹¹² Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, UNITAMS, 10 July 2023.

¹¹³ Interview with Khalid Hamdan Adam, NMAC, in Geneva, 30 April 2024; and email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

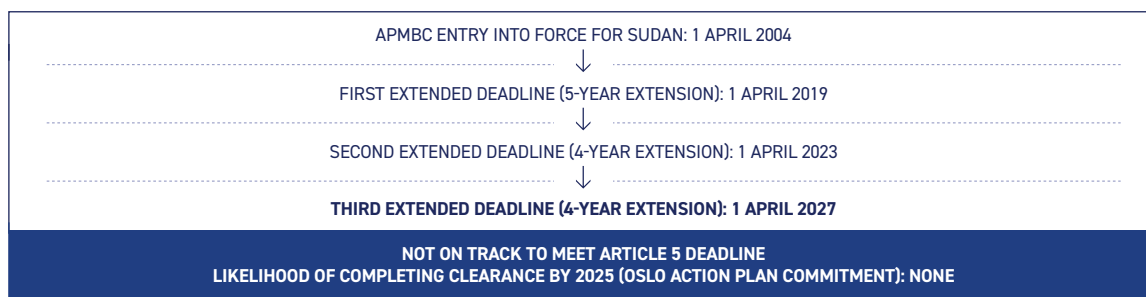
¹¹⁴ Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 4 June 2024.

¹¹⁵ Email from Johan Maree, UNMAS UNISFA, 27 July 2023.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Email from Jes Lockett, UNMAS UNISFA, 25 April 2024.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APBMC (and in accordance with the four-year extension granted by States Parties in 2022), Sudan is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 April 2027. It will not meet this deadline.

Prior to the outbreak of the conflict on 15 April 2023, there had been some positive developments, including a preliminary peace deal signed by Sudan's transitional government and the head of one of the two factions of the SPLM-N rebel group in 2020, which meant NMAC, in cooperation with UNMAS, was able to deploy teams to clear roads and other routes to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Blue Nile state.¹¹⁸ Sudan also reported in 2020 a joint initiative with Chad to clear the border areas between the two countries, though this was on hold due to the political and security situation in 2022.¹¹⁹ In June 2021, the UN reported that humanitarian agencies had been able to access conflict-affected communities in the five areas controlled by the SPLM-N El Hilu in South Kordofan and Blue Niles states for the first time in ten years.¹²⁰

Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2023	0.01
2022	0.08
2021	0.03
2020	0.35
2019	0.87
Total	1.34

However, poor security continued to hamper demining efforts and in 2022, full access to most of the known affected communities in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states was still not possible. Other obstacles to completion included inadequate funding and lack of sufficient demining equipment, rising inflation, newly discovered contamination, and climatic factors and geographical conditions, including the impact of climate change on extended rainy seasons.¹²¹ At the start of 2023, it was already unlikely that Sudan would meet its new APBMC deadline of 1 April 2027. The conflict that broke out in April has exacerbated the situation, preventing survey and clearance and leading to further EO contamination. At the time of writing, it was uncertain when survey and clearance of AP mined area would resume. As a consequence, Sudan will not meet its Article 5 deadline of 1 April 2027.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Sudan had a plan to deal with residual risk and liability post-completion.¹²² As at March 2022, NMAC had continued to deal with any residual contamination in the Eastern states through deploying teams with government funding. However, Sudan planned, in the long term to establish a sustainable national capacity within the military or police.¹²³ Before the 2023 conflict, Sudan had undertaken to provide annual updates to the APBMC Committee on its capacity to respond to residual contamination.¹²⁴

118 Statement of Sudan on Article 5, Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties, 16–20 November 2020; and Statement by Sudan on Cooperation and Assistance, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

119 Statement of Sudan on Cooperation and Assistance, Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties, 16–20 November 2020; and email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 31 March 2022.

120 Joint UN Press Release, "UN agencies in Sudan reach conflict-affected communities in non-government-controlled areas for first time in a decade", 13 June 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3j7wMiP>.

121 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021; and Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 4–5.

122 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

123 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021 and 31 March 2022.

124 Statement by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on the Analysis of the Request for extension by Sudan, August 2022, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022; and Informal presentation by Sudan on its Article 5 deadline extension request, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.