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República de Moçambique

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMB. PEDRO COMISSÁRIO**  
**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**  
**TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA**  
**AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**  
**AT THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING**  
**OF THE CONVENTION ON ANTI - PERSONNEL**  
**MINE BAN CONVENTION**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 08 JUNE 2017

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to express the profound gratitude of the Mozambique Government to Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi for his excellent and effective leadership as President of the Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties. We thank the Chairperson and members of the Committee on the Implementation of article 5 for their tireless and commendable work on the Mine Ban Convention.

Mr. President,

The Government of Mozambique has always given particular importance to the Mine Action Program and to the implementation of the National Plan for Mine Action 2008-2014, in compliance with international obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty. In the same vein, the Government has also been committed to the implementation of Article 4 of the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions.

It was within these commitments and efforts that we were able to announce completion of the implementation of Article 5 obligations of the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) by Mozambique in September 2015. That step was thought to mark the end of proactive humanitarian demining efforts in the country. Mozambique declared its fulfilment to obligations under Article 5 of the Convention by having determined that there were no longer areas under the jurisdiction or control of Mozambique in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced. However, as residual contamination is likely for any state whose territory has been extensively and for long time exposed to the use of mines or explosive weapons, Mozambique has unfortunately experienced the occurrence of residual contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

As a matter of fact, in April 2016, following two cases of suspected mine accidents in the district of Nangade at the Mozambique-Tanzania boarder, it was confirmed through non-technical survey (NTS) and technical survey (TS) that there was a suspected minefield measuring approximately 63,000 m<sup>2</sup> still existing in the area. Further investigations also identified two additional minefields in Nangade measuring approximately 14,000 square meters and 8,000 square meters respectively.

In the report submitted at the MSP in 2015, Mozambique indicated that in the event that previously unknown mined areas are discovered after the country attained Article 5 completion, it would immediately inform all States Parties of such a discovery, report such mined areas in accordance with its obligations under Article 7, destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in the mined area as soon as possible, and also make known its need for assistance to other States Parties, as appropriate. It is under such circumstances that the Government, in cooperation with the Norwegian Peoples' Aid (NPA), implemented a six months project starting January 2017 to deal with identified mine problem at the Mozambique-Tanzania Border.

Therefore, I am happy to report to this session that, to date, the Government has managed to clear all the identified minefields at the Mozambique – Tanzania boarder, with over 100 antipersonnel mines recovered and demolished, and over 100,000 m<sup>2</sup> of land cleared and returned to the local population for agricultural purposes and subsistence activities.

Exactly this month, we shall also reassess the status of the 4 remaining minefields measuring 1,881 square meters currently submerged in water in Inhambane province. These remaining minefields will continuously be monitored and cleared once the water level recedes and access is gained for their clearance.

We attach great importance to the sharing of this information with you and to being totally transparent regarding our respect for and fulfillment of the Mine Ban Convention.

Mr. President.

Allow me to particularly thank the Norwegian Peoples' Aid for the support they provided, ensuring that Mozambique dealt with its residual minefields in an efficient and timely manner. We also thank the Norwegian Government for providing the funds that ensured the deployment of clearance assets during the operations in Nangade.

As stated previously, there is still a pressing need to consolidate the excellent results achieved in implementing the Mine Action Program in Mozambique vis a vis establishing an effective residual contamination response mechanism.

The Government's strategy to meet these challenges has always been based on the technical training of national cadres to carry out the tasks of residual nature, the destruction of any explosive devices when necessary and in mobilizing

resources. At this stage, training programs are targeted, preferably, to the Police and Military.

Mr. President,

We believe that with the support of the International Community and involvement in the creation of national capacity and technical conditions for management of residual contamination, we will succeed, once again, to ensure that even the residual mines cease to exist and that no citizen again falls victim of anti-personnel mines.

We also welcome and encourage any support from our development partners and international organizations in dealing with the remaining stockpiles of obsolete Arms storage sites in the country particularly in Malhazine, in Maputo province and Nacala, in Nampula province.

Mr. President,

As we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mine Ban Convention, Mozambique wishes to reiterate her strong commitment to the principles and objectives of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and to the Maputo Action Plan which was adopted by the III Review Conference in 2014.

I thank you, Mr. President!