

ZIMBABWE'S UPDATE TO THE INTERCESSIONAL MEETING OF STATE PARTIES 22-24 JUNE 2021

INTRODUCTION

1. The Chair, your excellencies, distinguished delegates, let me take this opportunity to give you an update on Zimbabwe's Article 5 Implementation.

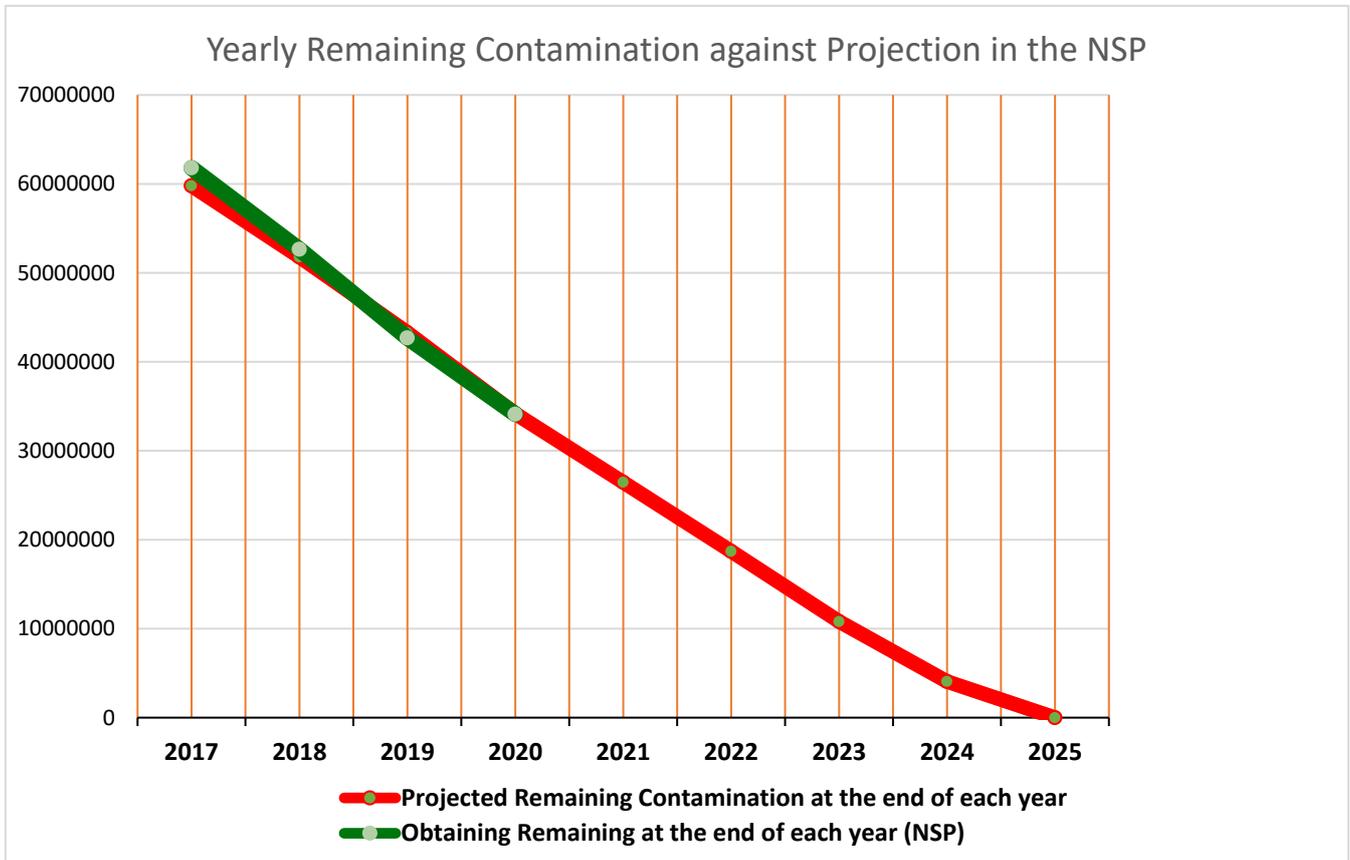
Zimbabwe continues pursuing its obligation to the Convention as far as clearing mined areas is concerned. Zimbabwe is sailing in an eight-year (2018-2025) extension period granted during the 16MSP. Hopes remain high that with necessary support from the national and international stakeholders this will be the last extension request. Zimbabwe has managed to maintain capacity for the previous years thus remaining on course with the projected annual land release figures.

PROGRESS TO DATE

2. You may recall that at the granting of the extension period, Zimbabwe's remaining contamination was **66 139 289m²**. Zimbabwe has managed to keep pace with time. Thus maintaining the set goal of finishing the job by 2025. The programme has released huge swathes of land mostly by clearance and reduction to remain with a contamination of **34 116 225 m²** by December 2020. This is aggregated by minefield stretch and organisation as shown on the table below.

Minefield	TOTAL
Musengezi to Mazowe (HALO)	6'576'690
Mazowe to Rwenya River (MAG)	9'751'263
Mwenezi to Sango Border(Reinforced Ploushare) (NMCU)	2'437'629
Crooks Corner to Sango Border (Cordon Sanitaire) (APOPO)	7'196'038
Rusitu to Muzite Mission (NPA)	4'611'555
Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill (NPA)	2'637'513
Lusulu (NMCU)	905'537
Total	34'116'225

The COVID 19 pandemic slowed down progress during 2020 and the first half of 2021. Otherwise completion could have been earlier than planned. Even though, the Zimbabwe programme managed to hold on to its annual release targets as shown on the graph below:



All organisations did exceptionally well albeit the COVID restrictions. As alluded to, Zimbabwe released **10'545'554 m²** in 2020 to remain with a **contamination of 34 116 225 m²** as at 31 Dec 2021.

2021 Operations

As of 31 May, the remaining figure had reduced to **27,401,795 m²**. Zimbabwe is pleased to announce the long awaited commencement of operations by APOPO on 1 January 2021. This will add the impetus of the land release. However, There has been a general fall in the donor funding into the programme. NPA, HALO Trust and MAG are scheduled to lose some capacity by end of June 2021 due to a decline in funding by one of the major donors. This and the current global pandemic will definitely work against the ZIMAC plans. This has to be managed before it affects the 2025 goal. As such Zimbabwe calls on willing donors to come forth to ensure Zimbabwe's dream is kept alive.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION STRATEGY

In December 2018, all mine action stakeholders in Zimbabwe with assistance from GICHD held a workshop in Harare to come up with a draft Communications and Resource Mobilisation

Strategy. The document was approved by the Government in 2019. Its launch was scheduled for 2020. This could not be done due to the COVID pandemic. It remains on the cards until the situation allows.

EORE

Zimbabwe continue to witness improvement in behaviour change by communities close to mined areas due to the extensive EORE conducted by ZIMAC and the operators. However, on a sad note, Zimbabwe experienced some incidents from ERWs in districts far away from mined areas. As such plans are underway to expand the RE to other districts which had always been ranked safe due to absence of minefields.

MONITORING THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Zimbabwe is keeping track of the National Mine Action Strategic Plan and making positive adjustments where possible. These adjustments will be reported yearly through the Article 7 reports. The 2020 Article 7 report was timely submitted and covered in detail the current capacity and future projections. It is pleasing to note that even though there has been adjustments and organisations failing to start as had been planned, the main goal remains achievable and within reach.

NATIONAL COMMITMENT

The Government of Zimbabwe remains fully committed to ensure the country fulfils its Article 5 obligation within the current extension period. Regardless of the limited resources at its disposal, the Government ensures that the NMCU and ZIMAC are provided with resources they require to accomplish the job and also assist the international demining NGOs accredited to Zimbabwe with the necessary support they might require from time to time. Zimbabwe has a very strong national capacity with a National Mine Clearance Unit which has always been destroying mines before the coming of international organisations. It is this Unit which will remain responsible for any new discoveries and or residual contamination.