

Mr. President

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ethiopia is among the leading countries that joined the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, which it signed in 1997, ratified on 17 December 2004 and has become State Party since June 2005. I just focus on some of the major achievements in implementing the provisions of the Convention by Ethiopia.

Ethiopia suffered from landmine contamination left over from the conflicts dating back to the five year foreign occupation attempt of the mid -1930s and including the 1998-2000 war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in Ethiopia have negatively affected people's lives.

Consequently, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia established a Government institution called, the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO), which is legally mandated with the crucial task of conducting mine clearance, Mine Risk Education and related activities.

Between 2002 and 2011, a de-mining of over 60 sq. Kms. of land mostly from the severely affected regions of Tigray, Somali and Afar was completed, which contributed to the sustainable settlement of 366,000 people displaced by the border war with Eritrea.

Only Between 2007 and 2011, both through a technical and non-technical survey land release mechanisms, Ethiopian Mine Action Program have released 770.04 Sq. Kms of land. So far, Combined with indirect beneficiaries, it is estimated that a total of 2.55 million people have benefited as the result of these de-mining operations.

According to the available statistical data on the socio-economic benefit of mine clearance operations, 98% of the safe land released was used by local residents for farming and/or grazing thus contributing to increased food security and agricultural development. The remaining 2% are utilized for housing of returnees and local inhabitants supporting their resettlement and rehabilitation as well as stabilization of peace.

The nationwide technical survey that was conducted in Ethiopia since 2007 that a remaining of some 314 suspected hazardous areas exist.

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As the locations of the remaining minefields are in the remote areas, mostly at the boarder of Somalia, The Ethiopian Mine Action Office was unable to create access to the places for landmine clearance. Moreover, no more areas have to

deploy a large size of demining units. Therefore, also as a matter of solution, the Ethiopian Government has decided to transfer the Capacity together with the Mandates of the Mine Action Program to the Ministry of National Defense. This process of transfer has been ongoing for the last few months and a complete transfer will be conducted soon after we return from this meeting.

We believe the decision is a crucial step in our trip to compliance and is important especially for two reasons

1. The remaining LIS recorded 314 suspected areas and left unvisited by post EMAO technical survey units will be easily reachable to Ministry of National Defense than to the civilian Mine Action Program.
2. With demining resources and donations coming shorter and shorter, it is important that to reshuffle the structure of mine clearance teams based on the remaining spot tasks. So that Ministry of National Defense, as Defense is in a better position for budgeting compared to the Mine Action Program.

Following the decision the MoND as responsible for the remaining jobs to meet the APMBC, took some measures and assign a department to Handel the responsibility and mandates of post EMAO. The Assigned combat Engineers division received most Assets from the previous mine action that includes a significant numbers of de-miners a training center and almost all capacity.

For the last two years the Combat engineers Division planed to reach to areas not accessible and accomplish clearance activities on areas left by EMAO/ Ethiopian Mine Action Office/ . But before deploying clearance teams to those areas the division strongly working on capacity building by developing mine action standards through combat engineer teams parallel to ERW clearance

/spot task/. The aim of this preparation and capacity building is that to conduct training and clearance activities with minimal costs that are covered by its own budgets.

During this training session four companies having 140 men-seized received the basic humanitarian deminers training. The content of this training focus up on Explosive ordinance Disposal /EOD/ regarding Explosives and Remnants of war, Battle Area Clearance, Techniques of casualty evacuation /Casavac/ and First aid. The first humanitarian Demining basic course held from July 15/2013 to November 09/2013.

In case of serving Rapid Responses for the communities having impact of remnants of war, the combat engineers division involving on reshuffling the structure of the Rapid Response and EOD teams. In addition to this the division equipped and engaged all available demining tools for the time being. On the other hand the division prepares a base camp for all teams close to the capital city Addis Ababa.

Parallel to this capacity building activities From January 01/2013 until end of November 2013 the rapid response Teams visited more than 10 reported communities in Amhar, Oromiya, south, and Somalia regional states. As a result they checked and cleared more than 100,000m² and destroyed 10 anti personnel mines and 176,000 unexploded ordinances.

In this case, the combat Engineers division needs more time to reorganize & Deployment of Special teams & to be clear areas according to the IMAS standards. That is why the division agreed to request two more years to accomplish the clearance tasks.

I Thanks.