



## Comments on Zimbabwe's extension request

9 April 2014

We thank Zimbabwe for preparing and submitting its extension request.

We have read the request with attention, and we have shared comments with the national authorities. We thank Zimbabwe for its answers to our questions. We believe that the request as such is substantial enough to serve as a basis for a decision. Nonetheless we believe that States Parties would be interested in receiving clarifications on a number of points, and we believe that Zimbabwe should make a number of commitments related to the way activities are conducted. You will find our detailed comments on the table outside this room.

**First**, survey is underway in the country's largest mined area and according to our information, preliminary findings suggest that contamination in this area may cover a considerably smaller surface than previously estimated. We would like to ask that Zimbabwe make the new estimate of contamination public as soon as possible after the conclusion of survey.

**Second**, in 2012, the Analyzing Group encouraged Zimbabwe to continue seeking improved land release methodologies that could lead to its Article 5 obligations being fulfilled in a shorter time frame. So we were wondering if Zimbabwe had information to share on how it followed-up on the Analyzing Group's remark.

**Third**, some activities still depend on the signature of an agreement with Mozambique on demining activities along their border, on which negotiations have started long ago. The ICBL encourages Zimbabwe and Mozambique to conclude negotiations as a matter of urgent priority, since the lack of an agreement could also potentially impact Mozambique's ability to meet its own deadline.

**Fourth**, you will all be aware that unfortunately, very lengthy local administrative procedures delayed the start of clearance activities by non-governmental operators, and this is one of the reasons behind the need for yet another interim request. So we would encourage Zimbabwe to ensure the administrative framework for operators is supportive of efficient activities. This could enable a precious time gain.

And **finally**, we note that the request does not provide information on how funds will be raised or on whether the government has already committed funds for the extension period.

Thank you.