



Government of Uganda

Statement by

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Honourable Members of States Parties, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Government of Uganda is taking mine action seriously and is building infrastructure and national capacity to respond. I am the Director of the National Mine Action Centre-Uganda which is a component within the Department of Disaster Preparedness in the Office of the Prime Minister. Specific actions are planned to ensure that Uganda complies with the obligation to destroy all known anti-personnel mines and ERW.

Plans for demining

The Government of Uganda is establishing national demining capacity and has doubled the demining teams since the 7th States Parties meeting. The teams include both police officers and army personnel who are trained to international standards and have been seconded to the National Mine Action Centre. The teams are engaged in clearance operations of Suspected Hazardous Areas in northern Uganda. Our strategy is to ensure that land is released for internally displaced persons to return and settle as priority.

It is anticipated that by 2009 Uganda shall have adequate capacity to carry-out technical surveys, explosive disposal ordnance and clearance capacity to enable the Uganda Mine Action Centre to destroy all anti-personnel mines in the identified mined areas under Uganda's jurisdiction.

It is planned during 2007, to further increase capacity through the deployment of two mine detection dog sets for area reduction and establish quality control. It is further planned to use mechanical demining equipment to clear the three recently identified minefields in the District of Kitgum close to the border with Sudan. To meet these two goals it will be necessary to seek assistance through like minded donor States Parties and work with INGO partners.

The Uganda Mine Action Centre is focusing on land release through quality and risk management and is introducing tolerable risk management.

Progress Made in demining Since Last Update

Ongoing Needs Assessment/Demining

Efforts have been made to identify suspected hazardous areas in Northern Uganda. With the promise of potential peace, efforts have been made to collect data on suspected hazardous areas as soon as areas are identified as being secure. Outcomes of the needs assessment have identified;

- 13 suspected hazardous areas were identified in the District of Lira and have been demined, pending quality control and quality assurance

- All affected areas in Kaberamaido district have been cleared and are being used by the community for farming. This enabled the return of more than 2,000 internally displaced persons.
- 9 suspected hazardous areas are identified in Soroti pending clearance
- 91 suspected hazardous areas are identified in Gulu with deminers prioritizing this district
- 153 suspected hazardous areas are identified in Kitgum pending completion and clearance
- 63 suspected hazardous areas are so far identified in Amuru pending clearance and completion of the needs assessment.
- 6 of the 56 identified suspected hazardous areas in Kasese have been cleared, pending quality control and quality assurance.
- Pader remains a concern as no needs assessment is yet done due to funding gaps

In northern Uganda over 80% of the population has lived in IDP camps for over ten years with restricted movement often limited to less than five kilometres. Due to the lack of movement it is felt that the numbers of suspected hazardous areas will increase when return initiates.

.Since the last reporting, two additional multi purpose technical survey/explosive ordnance disposal/clearance teams have been made operational and were deployed to Gulu in February. We thank the Danish Government for supporting these teams.

It is anticipated that one quality control team will be operational and deployed by May through the ongoing collaboration with the German Government.

IMSMA 4.0

All identified suspected hazardous areas have been put into the IMSMA database. An IMSMA 4.0 officer for the Uganda Mine Action Centre has been recruited..

There is ongoing capacity development. Two Uganda Mine Action Centre (UMAC) staff from the Operations Department completed an quality assurance/quality control training at the International Mine Action Training Centre Nairobi facilitated by Cranfield University. The Operations Manager of the UMAC completed an exchange programme to the Yemen Mine Action Programme.

Work Pending for Compliance

1. Mine Action Needs Assessments to be completed in Pader and Amuru Districts in the North of Uganda and Bundibugyo and parts of Kabarole Districts in Western Uganda.
2. Two additional multi purpose technical survey/explosive ordnance disposal/clearance teams should be established and deployed to Pader and Kitgum in the second half of 2007.
3. One additional quality control team should be made fully operational and deployed not later than Quarter 3 2007.
4. Deployment of two mine detection dog sets for area reduction and quality control in the second half of 2007.
5. Mechanical demining initiated to clear the recently identified mine field in Kitgum close to the border to Sudan.

The plans for demining and meeting the obligations will depend on the successful outcome of the peace negotiations and the eventual end of conflict. The prospective end-date of fulfilling obligations in Article 5 is dependent on this factor. With support from like minded donor States Parties Uganda could clear all known suspected hazardous areas by the end-date of August 2009

The Uganda Mine Action Center is following events in Juba and monitoring the situation to ensure that if extension is required, that application is made. .

Financial and Technical Means for Article 5 Obligations

Negotiations have initiated to open a national budget line for mine action. It is anticipated that \$300,000 USD will be allocated in this financial year.

A secondment mechanism is in place for additional demining capacity with Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

A capacity building programme through partnership with GICHD, International Mine Action Training Centre Nairobi, Cooperation with INGO, UNDP who provide both technical advisors and the MAX programme.

A decision has been taken that the Uganda Mine Action Programme will move into a nationally executed programme during the course of 2007. I appeal to UNDP to quicken this process. The national execution recommendations have been made in the external evaluation. There will be participatory meetings and a shift to a new framework. A transition phase will be initiated and new agreements renegotiated.

Priorities for External Assistance

Deployment of two mine detection dog sets for area reduction and quality control. One, preferably two quality control teams to be established in Uganda for land release. The establishment of mechanical capacity has become a priority due to the presence of mine field along the Sudan border. There continues to be a need to identify multi-year funding for demining.

Article 3

The current status on anti-personnel landmines retained are as follows;

Quantity	Type
584	POMZ-2
500	PMN
161	PMD-1
121	OZM-3
231	PMA-1
200	Nr 413
1	T-72

Lastly the Government the Uganda would like to thank all the partners for their support. With this continued support we hope to fulfill our obligations under Article 5 within the stated end-date for fulfilling obligations.

Thank you.

For God and My Country