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Eritrea's Statement in the 12th meeting of states parties to the convention on the prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction 3-7 December 2012 Geneva, Switzerland

**H.E Mr.Matjaz Kovacic President for the 12thMSP,
Delegates of States Parties,
Mine Action Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Mr. President,

Thanking you for giving me the opportunity to have the floor, I express my wish for the success of this 12th meeting and thereby congratulate the president of the 11th meeting H:E Mr. Prak Sakhon for the successful completion of his leadership on presiding the Mine Action conferences convened in the outgoing year. I also take this opportunity to express my appreciation and commend for the remarkable preparations usually rendered by Switzerland for this and such other Mine Action meetings.

Mr.Chairman

It is recalled that in the 11th meeting of the states parties, Eritrea had requested an extension period until February 2015 to continue for the fulfillment of its Article 5 obligations and drafted task plan until 2015 with the following main objectives:

- To complete level two surveys in the LIS recorded country wide impacted locations until 2014 and identify the actual remaining mined area needing thorough demining operations.
- Continue clearance with priorities of the remaining High and Medium Mine impacted areas until 2015.
- Continue also to conduct MRE activities to prevent new casualties until full clearance is justified.

Since the extension request period in the past two years until November 2012 our field teams have been conducting demining operations and surveys most of which was by non- technical means.

Within the above indicated period, the demining teams mostly deployed in Anseba region: and in some areas of Gash Barka and Debub conducted clearance and destruction of landmines and ERW. Clearance is conducted specifically in the following sub-regions (sub-zobas):

Anseba region: sub regions: Keren, Hamelmalo, Halhal and Habero clearing 3,277,910 square meters area.

Gash Barka region: Sub regions: Shambuko and Barentu and cleared 1,210,458 square meters area.

Hence, the total progress achieved by Demining operations combined with technical survey in Gash Barka and Anseba regions since our extension request reporting period is the following:

Zoba/Region	Type of land-MinesDestroyed			Cleared ^{num} mined areas	Cleared area ⁱⁿ Sq.Mtrs
	AP	AT	ERW		
Anseba	1012	25	995	33	3,227,860
Gash.Barka	11	7	283	2	1,210,458
Total	1023	32	1278	35	4,438,318 = 4.5 sq. Km

Non -Technical Survey Progress

Ser.No	Zoba (Region)	N°.of Cleared mined areas	Verified free Area in Sq.m
1	Debub	15	330,515
2	Debubawi K.B	4	10,833,676
3	Semienawi K.B	16	5,175,034
4	Maakel	34	6,865,064
5	Gash Barka	16	3,678,584
6	Anseba	9	5,487,644
Total		94	34,309,301

Therefore, the total size of cleared and verified impact free area since 2011 until November 2012 is **38,747,619** sq. meters or about **39** sq. kms and number of cleared mined areas is **129**.

If we assess the progress since the completion of the LIS (since 2005) which estimated and recorded impacted area **129** square K.ms. and number of mined areas **751**, the addressed size of cleared and survey verified area until November 2012 is around **70** square kms. and number of mined areas cleared is **281**.

There was also a question and reminder comments from the convention through the co-chairs concerning the retained number of mines which the Eritrean Demining Authority kept in its Training Center.

As it was stated in detail at the standing committee meeting of May 2012, we have reduced them and kept the very minimum with most of it inert.

Concerning Mine Risk Education, the teams and community volunteers gave awareness outreaching the impacted communities in villages, schools, churches, health centers at public gathering on national festivals, etc. by visiting the following regions of the country:

Central Region: Sub regions Gala Nefhi, Berik and Serejeka

Anseba Region: Sub region Keren

Debub Region, Sub regions, AdiQuala, Adikeih, Senafe and Tsorona

Gash barka Region, Sub regions Shabuko, Lae lay Gash and Tokombia

Southern Red Sea Region, Sub regions Nakfa, Massawa and Ghindae

As a result of the activities conducted by our MRE teams mentioned in the above country wide locations, the total number of Mine Risk Education beneficiary people since 2011 until November 2012 are over **450,000**.

Other than this, Sensitizing Workshops were conducted for students, teachers, health focal persons and community volunteers in the following locations:

- Capacity building for community volunteers from Anseba and Northern Red sea regions was delivered in Keren.
- MRE assisted with exhibitions was delivered in Massawa during the Fenkil Operation memorial ceremony.
- MRE workshop was given to teachers training Institute students in Asmara.
- Audio Visual assisted MRE program is prepared by EDA and annually delivered to participants during the Eritrean national festival in Asmara EXPO.
- MREwork shop was delivered for health focal persons in Northern Red Sea region, sub regions Afabet and Massawa.

Mr. Chairman and honorable participant colleagues,

We know that a lot of challenging and intensive task is waiting us to meet our proposed objectives for the expected results until 2014 and mainly concerning the commitment for the completion of level two surveys.

But in my conclusion, I assure you that, with the available resources and national capacity my government remains committed and will continue with the highest concern for mine clearance which is being carried out hand in hand with the national development plans.

I thank you Sir.