



## Republic of Zambia

### **STATEMENT BY ZAMBIA DELIVERED DURING THE SIXTEENTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION HELD FROM 18<sup>TH</sup> 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER, 2017, VIENNA, AUSTRIA**

**Mr. president,**

I take this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Zambian delegation and join others to congratulate you for assuming the Presidency of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the **anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention being held here in Vienna the same place where 20 years ago, its text which is now a binding Treaty, was drafted leading to its subsequent adoption in Oslo and signed in Ottawa.**

Zambia is, therefore, happy to be part of the 16MSP which is coinciding with 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this successful treaty, whose social -economic importance cannot be over emphasised. To date One Hundred and Sixty-Three (163) states have become States Parties with Sri Lanka being the newest state Party. We therefore, wish to join others to congratulate Sri Lanka on its accession and welcome it to the APMBC family. We also wish to take this opportunity to encourage those states outside the convention to do so as soon as possible.

Zambia attaches great importance to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), and we commend the successes made with regard to land release and protection of human life. More than 53 million landmines have been

destroyed by the Conventions States Parties, resulting in millions of square meters of land being released for its productive use, fulfilling the spirit and the objective of the Convention as the casualty rate continues declining especially during the last two decades. We therefore, wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Algeria for declaring completion ahead of time. We also wish to commend Angola, Ecuador, Iraq, Thailand and Zimbabwe for their commitment to upholding the provisions of the convention by abiding to Article 5 requirements in submitting their extension requests.

**Mr. President,**

Under the Convention States Parties have undertaken to respect and uphold the provisions of the Convention including to destroy or ensure the destruction of all mines in mined area under their jurisdiction or control. States parties have also been encouraged to resort to the provisions of Article 5 in an event that completion would not be possible during the estimated timeline. It is in this regard that we note the engagement by Ukraine with the Committee on Article 5 Implementation. However, while, Zambia, notes the challenges Ukraine has found itself in, we wish to encourage Ukraine to submit its extension request the soonest in respect of the Convention and avoid continued noncompliance of this successful Treaty.

**Mr. President,**

Zambia remains resolved to working with all Stake holders to ensure that the suffering and harm caused by these anti-personnel mines and other indiscriminate weapons are minimised. In line with the Maputo Action Plan, we are committed to moving together towards the goal of a **world free of Anti - Personnel Mines** by 2025. Zambia is neither a producer, user or does it stockpile any of these indiscriminate weapons as demonstrated by being a member to the Ottawa Convention.

As a show of our commitment, soon after joining the Ottawa Convention in 2001, the reported stockpiled mines were destroyed in 2004 and had managed to complete the clearance operations as of 2009. Although, there are a few reported cases, Zambia, has remained active, through a standby team which undertake, on-the spot destructions.

With regard to national implementation, Zambia recognises the importance of adoption of domestic legislation aimed at imposing penal sanctions to prevent violation. We are happy to inform this meeting that the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is already domesticated and we believe that the laws in place under the APMBC are sufficient and could help in dealing with other indiscriminate weapons.

Further, the political leadership is in full support of protecting civilians from harm caused by the remnants of war and other explosive weapons. To this effect the government is in the process of developing a Strategic Plan to assist landmine survivors. The Government is also conducting a survey of survivors to be supported. Assistance to the survivors will include provision of prosthetic limbs and income generating activities.

Zambia looks forward to contributing to the enrichment of the body of international humanitarian law through her continued involvement in this treaty and many other disarmament Treaties, for the benefit of the world at large.

**I thank you**