



Republic of Angola

**STATEMENT OF ANGOLA
AT THE 17th MEETING OF STATE PARTIES
OF THE OTTAWA CONVENTION**

Delivered by

**Her Excellency
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Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary**

Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva

Head of Delegation

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Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Angolan delegation and on my own behalf, allow me to express our gratitude to the host country and organising committee in allowing us to take part during this 17th Meeting of state Parties. In the same regard it is my pleasure to congratulate other delegations upon their respective statements.

Excellencies

The Angolan Government has always given particular importance to the Mine Action Program and the implementation of its various mandates, this is in light of compliance with international obligations under the Article 5 of the Mine Ban treaty, commonly known as the Ottawa Convention.

After the end of periods of political instability, the Government of Angola prioritized demining as a key objective to be undertaken in the country. It was in this context that together with the international community and organizations that Government outlined an ambitious program aimed at demining the country in a relatively short period.

Cognizant of the threat that mines placed not only to the safety of Angolans, but also its threats to the socio and economic livelihood of the communities and populations in the country. The launch of the demining program was a key initiative in ridding the country of the scourge of mines and also guaranteeing a safe environment for the communities previously affected.

To Angola, getting rid of all landmines in the country and subsequent compliance with article 5 of the mine ban treaty has always constituted a significant milestone and a significant contribution to the global efforts towards the eradication of anti-personnel mines and honors international humanitarian disarmament. The activities undertaken in the country so far in clearing all known mined areas is a manifestation of the commitments made by Angola under the Nairobi Action Plan, Cartagena and Maputo.

Mr. President.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although Angola's commitment to ridding itself of mines has been a priority as previously mentioned, the magnitude of the threat and related challenges have previously impeded the progress of clearance in the country. Lack of a clear understanding of the countrywide

contamination, and the recent economic crisis created momentous challenges to the demining sector amongst others.

It is upon this backgrounds that on 11 May 2017, Angola submitted a second request to extend its mine clearance deadline until 31 December 2025. The request was granted by the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties (16MSP). In granting the request, the 16MSP requested that Angola submit to the Seventeenth Meeting of the States Parties an updated work plan for the remaining period covered by the extension request.

The Meeting also requested that this work plan contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas would be dealt with each year during the remaining period covered by the request and by which organizations, and a revised detailed budget.

We would like to inform this sitting that these recommendations have been fully adhered to and presented in our detailed work plan.

Mr. President,

Following the extension request, Angola together with its implementing partners especially the international operators managed to undertake extensive non-technical survey on most of the remaining Confirmed and Suspected mined areas in the country.

We are happy to mention that these activities have resulted in the cancellation of more than 98 million square meters of previously suspected and confirmed minefields in the country. To date, the previously reported 221 million square meters of remaining contamination in the country has been reduced to only 123 million square meters yet to be cleared of mines in Angola.

The remaining contamination figures are also anticipated to be further reduced with the completion of non-technical survey activities in Lunda Norte and Cabinda provinces.

It is also important to mention that rigorous database cleaning and reconciliation activities have been implemented to the national IMSMA database, and we are happy to report that this has drastically improved the quality of data and reporting in the country.

With funding support from DFID, NPA has hired a Capacity Development Advisor who is now embedded within CNIDAH, and he is tasked with the responsibility of providing the much needed guidance to the Angolan mine action programme especially in strengthening our internal Quality Management capacities, Information Management, and Strategic Management.

Mr. President.

At this juncture it is also worth mentioning again that the mentioned demining progress in the country would not be achieved if it wasn't for the valuable partnership with international

non-governmental partners like NPA, MAG, and HALO Trust. We continue encouraging these partners to continue standing with us as we continue working towards our 2025 deadline.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Although there has been progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the article 5 committee, the full implementation of clearance activities may still be hampered by shortfalls in funding.

In its request the government of Angola indicated that it would need approximately USD 348 million dollars to support the full implementation of the 2018-2025 extension. This amount was based on the remaining contamination of 221 million square meters as of November 2017.

To date, continuous database cleaning, clearance, and non-technical survey activities have drastically reduced the remaining contamination in the country to approximately 123 million square meters. With the current contamination, the funding gap projections for 2019-2025 activities are estimated at approximately USD 374 million to enable adequate implementation of clearance activities to the remaining contamination. Detailed explanation to the new budget projections have been clearly explained in the 2019-2025 work plan.

Mr. President

Although the government of Angola continues to recognize and prioritize demining in the country. The government is well aware of the challenge ahead of the demining sector in the country especially in line with its 2025 deadline. In the regard, the government has earmarked approximately 55 million USD for the demining sector covering the period 2019-2021. It is also anticipated that the same amount shall be allocated for the period 2022-2025. This contribution is however only a portion of the 374 million budget projection.

Mr. President

Angola remains fully in ensuring that the country is free of mines within the new 2018-2025 extension request, and we are optimistic that this goal can be a reality with the support of our donor friends and implementing partners.

I thank you, Mr. President!