

Ms. Sheila Mweemba



**STATEMENT BY THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATION AT THE 9TH MEETING OF
STATES PARTIES HELD FROM 24TH - 28TH NOVEMBER 2008 IN
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

MR. PRESIDENT, ZAMBIA'S ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE FALLS ON 1 AUGUST 2011. WHILE THIS MAY SEEM LIKE A WHILE FROM NOW, THERE IS NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY. THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO MEETING ITS OBLIGATIONS AND CALLS UPON ALL THOSE IN A POSITION TO ASSIST IN MEETING ITS DEADLINES TO DO SO. WE REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT WITH SUSTAINED DONOR ASSISTANCE ZAMBIA WILL BE ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANT WELL BEFORE THIS DATE.

SINCE THE UPDATE GIVEN DURING THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD LAST JUNE, THE LONG AWAITED LANDMINE IMPACT SURVEY IS WELL UNDERWAY WITH FUNDS FROM THE CANADIAN AND SWEDISH GOVERNMENTS THROUGH UNDP. CURRENTLY COMBINED TEAMS OF THE ZAMBIA MINE ACTION CENTRE AND NORWEGIAN PEOPLES AID (NPA) STAFF ARE UNDERTAKING THE NATIONWIDE SURVEY. AS AT LAST WEEK, TASK IMPACT ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN 258 WARDS OF THE 16 DISTRICTS SURVEYED THUS FAR. THESE DISTRICTS ARE IN 5 OF THE 7 PROVINCES EARMARKED FOR THE SURVEY. A TOTAL OF 2 WARDS HAD SPOT EOD CARRIED OUT WHILE ABOUT 189 WARDS WERE RECORDED AS NON-IMPACTED. IT IS ENVISIONED THAT ZAMBIA'S DEFINITIVE MINE CLEARANCE PLAN WILL BE FORMULATED UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE NATIONWIDE SURVEY. THE FINAL REPORT IS EXPECTED TO BE READY IN JUNE 2009.

SOME SMALL SCALE CLEARANCE WORK HAS ALSO BEEN CONDUCTED DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW. APART FROM PERIODIC SPOT EOD EXERCISES, A TOTAL OF OVER 10,503,350 SQUARE METERS WAS VERIFIED AND DECLARED SAFE THROUGH JOINT VENTURES WITH PRIVATE SECTOR COMMERCIAL PARTNERS WITH AN INTEREST IN SOME OF THE SUSPECTED CONTAMINATED AREAS. IN THIS REGARD,

ZMAC HAS BEEN WORKING WITH AN AUSTRALIAN COMPANY ENGAGED IN URANIUM MINING IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE, WHICH IS ONE OF THE MOST AFFECTED AREAS. THIS KIND OF PARTNERSHIP HAS ENABLED THE MINE ACTION CENTRE TO FUND MOST OF THE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND CURRENTLY ONGOING THIS YEAR. THOUGH LIMITED, IT ULTIMATELY ADDS TO THE TOTAL AREA DECLARED SAFE THUS FAR AND CONTRIBUTES TO ZAMBIA'S DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT CLEARANCE WORK HAS BEEN SLOW, MINE RISK EDUCATION HAS CONTINUED TO BE THE MAJOR STRATEGY IN REDUCING MINE RELATED ACCIDENTS. IN THIS REGARD, SINCE THE REPORT GIVEN AT THE LAST STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS, A TOTAL OF 51 VOLUNTEER KEY COMMUNICATORS IN 4 REFUGEE CAMPS HAVE BEEN TRAINED. OF THE 51, 20 WERE FEMALE AND 31 MALE. THE MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THE 2 WEEK INTENSIVE TRAINING-OF-TRAINERS EXERCISE WAS TO EQUIP THE KEY COMMUNICATORS WITH BASIC KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO EFFECTIVELY SENSITIZE THE REFUGEE COMMUNITY ON THE DANGERS OF MINES AND ERW. THIS WOULD ALSO ADD VALUE TO THE REPATRIATION EXERCISES WHICH TAKE PLACE FROM TIME TO TIME. PART OF THE TRAINING INCLUDED A RIGOROUS EXERCISE OF CONDUCTING PILOT MRE CAMPAIGNS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS AS A WAY OF ASCERTAINING WHETHER THEY HAD UNDERSTOOD THE TRAINING EXERCISE.

WE HAVE ALWAYS EMPHASIZED - AND WE WISH TO REITERATE - OUR GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TOWARDS MEETING ITS OBLIGATIONS. I MUST HOWEVER REITERATE, AS MANY STATES AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE ALLUDED TO, THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO AVOID EXTENSIONS BEYOND TREATY OBLIGATIONS. WE THEREFORE CONTINUE TO APPEAL TO THOSE IN A POSITION TO ASSIST ZAMBIA AND OTHERS MEET TREATY OBLIGATIONS TO DO SO.

I THANK YOU MR. PRESIDENT.