

Mine Action Programme of Zimbabwe:

Status and Challenges in Implementation

Tuesday, 27 November 2018

Introduction and participants

On 27 November 2018, Zimbabwe and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention with the support of the Implementation Support Unit invited States and civil society representatives to engage in the Individualised Approach event for Zimbabwe. This event offered Zimbabwe a platform to share progress, needs and challenges in implementation since the first individualised event conducted on 20 December 2017 in Vienna, Austria, on the margins of the Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties.

Following a presentation by Zimbabwe, participants engaged in an informal discussion about possible opportunities of cooperation and assistance in support of Zimbabwe's efforts. Participants received a package including Zimbabwe's presentation and handouts detailing Zimbabwe's progress in implementation of its obligations under the Convention.

Participants

States: Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Convention representatives: Canada as Chair of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance; Sweden as member of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance; and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit.

Organizations: APOPO, European Union, HALO Trust, International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre.

Presentation

Mr. Martin Rushwaya, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence of Zimbabwe presented an overview of Zimbabwe's engagement with the Convention, noting the history of contamination and Zimbabwe's current capacity to implement its obligations under the Convention. Mr. Rushwaya provided an overview Zimbabwe's National Mine Action Strategy, (2018-2025), outlining 4 goals: i) Land release, ii) Mine Risk Education, iii) Raising awareness at national and international levels, and iv) Victim Assistance.

Mr Rushwaya added that the launch of the strategy in Harare had not been well attended by those States who were present during the first individualised approach event, and welcomed comments from those present on how to best engage Embassies, donors, and stakeholders in-country. Zimbabwe indicated that with the political transition many things have changed and continue to change for the better and that it is committed to its Article 5 deadline. Zimbabwe further indicated that it would encourage more participation from the international community.

Zimbabwe presented that it will surpass its land release target for 2018. As of 31 October 2018, Zimbabwe had released 7,217,341 square metres against a target of 7,160,645 square metres.

Zimbabwe also reported that in an effort to increase land release efficiency it had implemented two pilot projects which included the use of mechanical clearance and mine detection dogs, as shared during the previous individualised approach meeting. Zimbabwe reported that both pilot projects had been evaluated and found to increase clearance rates and that these methodologies will continue to be used during the extension period.

Zimbabwe shared an update on its Mine Risk Education activities reporting a total of 53,109 beneficiaries, (with data being disaggregated by sex and age). Zimbabwe also reported the need for additional technical support in order to carry out a national landmine survivor survey.

Additional information by mine action NGOs working with Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe then opened the floor to mine action NGOs working with Zimbabwe - APOPO, the HALO trust, MAG and NPA – with each operated delivered a short presentation covering progress in their area of operations.

APOPO presented on its planned operations to clear mined areas within the boundaries of a wildlife sanctuary. APOPO outlined its intention to work with the Governments of Zimbabwe and Mozambique in order to facilitate the transport of mine clearance equipment from Mozambique to Zimbabwe in order to begin operations. APOPO indicated that they have a wealth of experience that was gained from Mozambique and that they are hopeful to be able to receive the equipment from Mozambique. APOPO further indicated that there are areas where mine detection dogs could be useful including on suspected contaminated roads and that a further challenge exists with medical evacuation.

MAG indicated that it is now operational in Zimbabwe. MAG emphasised the impact landmines have at a local level. MAG indicated that, while accidents with people are low, significant losses occur to local communities from landmines injuring and killing cattle, as well as preventing socio-economic development. MAG highlighted the direct impact landmine clearance has at this level through the construction of medical clinics and the opening of agricultural areas for safe grazing and farming.

NPA presented on its goal to complete the Leacon Hill to Sheba Forest mine field by 2022 and the Rusite to Muzite minefield by 2024. NPA provided updates on Mine Risk Education and Victim Assistance activities in support of local communities. NPA outlined three key challenges to its progress; i) a lack of awareness among potential donors, ii) a lack of linkages between mine action and development partners, iii) the presence of high density minefields that have slowed productivity.

The HALO Trust highlighted its work in Zimbabwe and the good cooperation between the operators and the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre. The HALO Trust also indicated that the mines in Zimbabwe pose a significant socio-economic impact on community members. HALO further indicated that, while Zimbabwe is heavily contaminated, with progress to date, together with the integration of mechanical clearance, Zimbabwe can achieve the States Parties' aspirational date of 2025. This will also be dependent on contributions from the international community.

Discussion

Based on the presentations, the following questions and comments were taken from the floor.

Participants inquired on how the first individualised approach, held on the margins of the 16MSP, benefitted Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe replied that at the follow-up event organised in Harare the level of attendance had been lower than had been anticipated, which had been somewhat of a disappointment.

Participants asked for further information on Zimbabwe's efforts to more effectively link mine action with development, particularly the sustainable development goals. Zimbabwe responded that linkages between mine action and development can be witnessed through the enhancement of food production, the safe construction of schools and freedom of movement of population groups across previously contaminated areas. Zimbabwe is working on a resource mobilizing strategy together with the GICHD, which is linked with the SDGs. Zimbabwe will share this strategy once it has been finalised. Zimbabwe will also provide information on land that has been released to beneficiaries and the positive effect this has had.

One participant congratulated Zimbabwe on its positive report in the Mine Action Review, 2018. Participants also observed that strengthening links with development actors could result in the mobilisation of additional resources for mine action. Participants also noted that the piloting of mechanical assets and mine detection dogs had been positive for Zimbabwe resulting in increased land released outputs and encouraged Zimbabwe to continue exploring and expanding these methodologies.

A participant raised a question on the level of coordination between the Zimbabwe mine action centre and operators. In response NPA shared that the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre is cooperative and transparent with all operators.

The Chair made mention of the Committee's willingness to support Zimbabwe, where relevant, in assisting to secure equipment which is currently in Mozambique. In particular, participants mentioned equipment of the HALO Trust and APOPO. Zimbabwe responded that they are meeting bilaterally with Mozambique and will continue to do so during the 17MSP and that, in principle, an agreement has been reached.

Closing remarks

In closing, Mr. Martin Rushwaya emphasised the low number of accidents reported in Zimbabwe, and that while this is positive, communities living near contaminated areas are not free from the fear and danger of landmines. Zimbabwe reinforced its efforts to clean up what remains and to continue in its efforts to secure support towards its 31 December 2025 deadline.

Follow up

- Participants discussed the importance of follow up with their representatives for engagement with the ZIMAC in Harare in particular organizations such as the UNDP in order to formalize linkages between mine action and national development plans as well as the implementation of sustainable development Goals.
- Participants also discussed the importance of making a call for the international community to ensure that Zimbabwe received the adequate support to make 2025.
- Zimbabwe continues to work for increased and diversified support from the international community.

Questions about the Mine Action Program in Zimbabwe should be directed to: **Col. MB Ncube, Director, Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre, zimacaction@gmail.com**

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Zimbabwe's Individualised Approach
Tuesday, 27 November 2018
Participant List

	STATE	NAME
1	Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Daire Courtney
2	Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Koen Höcker
3	Permanent Mission of Norway	Hana Cervenka
4	Permanent Mission of South Africa	Shuaib Mahomed
5	Permanent Mission of Sweden	Daniel Nord
6	Switzerland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Alessandro Palmoso
7	United States, Department of State	Katherine Baker
8	Permanent Mission of Zambia	Margret Kaemba
9	Permanent Mission of Zambia	Chileshe Veronica Nkole
10	Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe	Mike Chigiji
11	Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe	Priscilla Alufusi
12	Zimbabwe, Ministry of Defence, Director, Policy, Public Relations International Affairs	Nicholas Mbara
13	Implementation Support Unit	Juan Carlos Ruan
14	Implementation Support Unit	Gregory Cathcart

	ORGANISATION	NAME
15	APOPO	Ashley Fitzpatrick
16	APOPO	Christophe Cox
17	APOPO	Tekimiti Gilbert
18	APOPO	Michael Heinman
19	APOPO	Havard Bach
20	APOPO	Charles Richter
21	HALO Trust	Calvin Ruysen
22	HALO Trust	Chris Pym
23	European Union	Frank Meeussen
24	European Union (Devco)	Jean-Jaques Lauture
25	International Coalition to Ban Landmines	Amelie Chayer
26	International Committee of the Red Cross	Wen Zhou
27	Mines Advisory Group	Adam Kamorowski
28	Mines Advisory Group	Roxana Bobolicu
29	Norwegian People's Aid	Katherine Harrison
30	Norwegian People's Aid	Siv Mjaaland
31	Norwegian People's Aid	Chimwemwe Tembo
32	Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre	Col MB Ncube
33	Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre	Cainos Tamanikwa