

ZIMBABWE

**ZIMAC UPDATE TO THE 14th MEETING OF STATES PARTIES 30 NOVEMBER-04
DECEMBER 2015**

INTRODUCTION

ZIMAC continues to monitor and coordinate demining operations on three minefields namely the Msengezi to Rwenya River, Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill and Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner by HALO Trust, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and National Mine Clearance Unit respectively, with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) rendering assistance on mine risk education and provision of demining equipment on the other hand.

Current Progress

Results of Survey completed in March 2015 show a **cumulative remaining mined land in Zimbabwe of 62 443 206m²**. I am happy to continue reporting positive developments on demining operation throughout the country. This can be witnessed by statics as at 31 October 2015 as follows:

National Mine Clearance Squadron

The National Mine Clearance Squadron continues with the clearance of the Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield. The unit is currently carrying out internal QC on the cleared segments in preparation for the ZIMAC QA/QC team's Post Clearance Inspection and also clearance of the Primary minefield on the **remaining 32km double stretch**. As at 31 October 2015, the Squadron had cleared an area of **6 684 137m²** recovering and destroying **21 486 AP- mines**.

Norwegian People's Aid

The NPA completed the Burma Valley Minefield in March 2015 and ZIMAC did QA-QC in April 2015. The Cleared land was released on 09 July 2015. The organisation continues with the clearance of the Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill minefield. By 31 October 2015, a total of **225 103m²** had been cleared and **920 anti-personnel mines** recovered and destroyed.

HALO Trust

Clearance of Musengezi to Rwenya River minefield by HALO Trust has increased significantly since commencement of operations in 2015. By 31 October 2015, a total area of **609 665m²** had been cleared and **10 237 anti-personnel mines** recovered and destroyed. ZIMAC has deployed a QA/QC team to the completed segments for Post

Clearance Inspection of an area of **322,969m²**. Land release is expected during the 1st quarter of 2016.

Mine Risk Education

The National Mine Clearance Squadron, HALO Trust and Norwegian Peoples Aid continue to carryout community liaison to communities living along the confirmed mined areas in areas they are demining. Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is planning to conduct MRE to communities, schools staff and school children who live adjacent to the minefields in the Eastern Border line in March next year.

Capacity Building Support

Zimbabwe continues to engage the International Community and other States Parties for assistance and support in order to clear the remaining mined areas. Through partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the capacity of the National Mine Clearance Squadron has been enhanced by the ICRC's provision of demining equipment and supporting training of the unit's personnel. Recently 11 members from ZIMAC completed training in Instruction and Training Management. This has now increased the capacity of the National Mine Clearance Squadron to carryout training in accordance with the Zimbabwe National Mine Action Standards (ZNMAS)

Article 5 Obligation

Zimbabwe remains committed to her Article 5 Obligations. In response to information on reduction or decrease in size of contamination in most of our minefields, the information that came out from the non-technical final report is as follows:

a. HALO Trust Results of Survey

HALO Trust conducted National Technical Survey (NTS) of the Musengezi to Rwenya minefield from August 2013 to February 2015. Initially the minefield was estimated to be 145 square kilometres (145km²) which 335km long estimate if From the survey, it is now estimated that the minefield is 28 square kilometres (28km²) with a frontage of 426km composed a Cordon Sanitaire stretching 201.8km with a depth of 35m, a ploughshare field stretching 151.1km with a depth of 102m and a reinforced Ploughshear field of 46.4km with an average depth of 97m which translates to an 80% reduction from the previously. The total area which has been cancelled through the NTS is 117 square kilometres (117km²). **Therefore the remaining area to be addressed is 28,025,706 square meters.**

b. NPA Results of Survey

NPA conducted NTS of the Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill minefield from December 2013 to December 2014. Initially, the minefield was estimated to be 50km long with a depth of 400m (20 000 000 square metres). From the survey, it is now estimated that the minefield is 50 km long with an average width of 100m. The total area which has been cancelled through the NTS is 16 500 000 square metres. **Therefore the remaining area to be addressed is 5,000,000 square metres.**

NPA also conducted NTS of the Rusitu to Muzite Mission minefield from December 2013 to December 2014. Originally, the minefield was estimated to be 75km long with a width of 400m (30 000 000 square metres). From the survey, it is now estimated that the minefield is 75km long with an average width of 200m. The survey results, have reduced the suspected contamination by 18 750 000 square metres. **Therefore the remaining area to be addressed is 15,000,000 square meters.**

c. NMC Sqn Results of Survey

NMC Sqn completed NTS in 2006 and the results of the survey have been in use since then and there has been no change from the Technical Survey and the actual clearance. No additional data has been discovered from technical surveys and during the ongoing clearance. The current remaining contamination of the double stretch minefield is now 32 km by 400m for the ploughshare field (12 800 000 square metres) and 32 km by 25m for the cordon sanitaire (800 000 square metres). **Therefore the remaining area to be addressed is 13,600,000 square meters.**

I am happy to inform you distinguished delegates that progress has been made to engage two more international demining organisations, namely Mine Advisory Group (MAG) and Apopo so as to increase the rate of clearance. The Government of Zimbabwe is working on the finalisation of the the two Memoranda of Understanding and if all goes well the MOUs should be ready for signing before the end of December 2015. Come January 2018, we should be saying we will meet the 2025 deadline where it is envisaged that by that year the world will be free of mines.

Victim Assistance

- Since independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe has invested in the provisions of social services and social protection with a special focus on vulnerable groups that cover the elderly, children, women, youth and Persons with Disabilities who include Victims of Land Mines and other explosive remains of war (ERWs). This commitment has been evidenced by the number of Acts of Parliament and policies put in place to address the needs of the vulnerable groups.

Progress Update

- Zimbabwe has put in place a comprehensive legal framework that by and large, addresses the needs of vulnerable groups that include Persons with Disabilities among whom fall victims of landmines and ERWs.
- This update therefore focuses on policies and programmes in place specifically addressing the needs of Persons with Disabilities and simultaneously covering the major components of victim assistance in an integrated manner, i.e. *Legislation and Policies, Access to Emergency and Continuing Medical Care, Physical and Functional Rehabilitation, Psychological and Psychosocial Support and last but not least, Social and Economic Inclusion*
- The Constitution of Zimbabwe in part 3 section 83 defines the Rights of Persons with disabilities and provides for the need for Persons with Disabilities realize their full potentials.
- The Government of Zimbabwe enacted the Disabled Persons Act 17:01 of 1992 to spearhead the realization of ideals.
- On 23 September 2013, Zimbabwe ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities thus ensuring the attainment of ideals of Persons with Disabilities.
- Currently, Zimbabwe has completed the process of aligning all pieces of legislation to the new constitution.

Towards this end on 22-26 September 2014, the government of Zimbabwe and the Africa Disability Alliance based in South Africa, jointly organized and held a round table conference in Zimbabwe. The conference brought together various organizations of Persons with Disabilities from within the Southern African Region to participate with their government counterparts from the region to discuss issues pertaining to the rights and welfare of Persons with Disabilities

With the good news that there will be an increase on funding to HALO Trust and NPA by one of their Donors and envisaged coming on board of two additional international demining organisations i.e. APOPO and MAG, Zimbabwe would see an increased rate of clearance to meet the set deadlines. Zimbabwe remains committed to her Article 5 Obligations. Together we will defeat the mines and have a mine free Zimbabwe and indeed the whole world.

Conclusion

With the good news that there will be an increase on funding to HALO Trust and NPA by one of their Donors and envisaged coming on board of two additional international demining organisations i.e. APOPO and MAG, Zimbabwe would see an increased rate of clearance to meet the set deadlines. Zimbabwe remains committed to her Article 5 Obligations. Together we will defeat the mines and have a mine free Zimbabwe and indeed the whole world.