



*Missão Permanente da República de Moçambique  
Junto das Nações Unidas, Genebra  
O Embaixador*

Nº. ~~137~~ MP-GE/15

Geneva, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015

*Excellency,*

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique, I have the honor to present to Your Excellency and to the Permanent Mission of Poland our most respectful compliments.

My purpose in writing is to provide you, and through you to all States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, an update on the efforts by Mozambique to complete implementation of its mine clearance obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

Mozambique's efforts to rid itself of the scourge of anti-personnel mines has spanned more than two decades. It was once thought that Mozambique would need about 50 to 100 years to clear all areas originally known or suspected to contain mines in all of Mozambique's 10 provinces. In the last seven years alone, Mozambique has cleared and released more than 42 million square meters of area previously suspected or confirmed to contain mines, resulting in the destruction of more than 85,900 anti-personnel landmines. Mozambique was one of the first States Parties to ratify the Convention and had an original deadline of 1 March 1999 to complete demining. Mozambique twice requested and was granted extended deadlines, to 1 March 2014 and subsequently to 31 December 2014.

*His Excellency*

**Ambassador Remigiusz A. Henczel**

*Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland*

*Chair of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's Committee on Article 5 Implementation*

*Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations and Other International Organizations*

G E N E V A

Thanks to the support of a number of our partners, Mozambique has been able to come extremely close to having been able to complete implementation by its 31 December 2014 deadline. However, for the following reasons, demining operations were unable to conclude by that date:

- Prevailing low-intensity military hostilities creating a situation of temporary insecurity persisted between January and August 2014 in the provinces of Manica and Sofala. This prevented access to some mined areas in these provinces and created transportation and logistical difficulties to access the demining tasks.
- Higher transport and logistical costs were incurred due to the continuing insecurity and productivity in the affected areas was reduced. For example, due to conflict in Southern Sofala, teams and equipment from the south had to travel an alternative route via Zimbabwe which delayed deployment and caused increased costs.
- Heavy rains in December 2014 led to the suspension of some demining tasks in Manica and Sofala Provinces that otherwise would have been completed last year.

Mozambique has worked hard to comply with her deadline. Having slightly missed it, however, Mozambique is committed to being highly transparent with the States Parties as concerns the challenges that remain and Mozambique's plan to overcome them. In this connection, we would like to advise the following:

- All remaining demining tasks were completed in 2014 with the exception of the following 56 demining tasks covering a total area of approximately 289,000 square meters :

<b>Province</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Number of tasks</b>
Inhambane	Inharrime, Jangamo, Panda, Vilanculos and Zavala	23
Manica	Mossurize	1
Manica	Sussendenga	1
Sofala	Chibabava	24
Sofala	Dondo	5
Sofala	Nhamatanda	2 (includes 26 electricity pylons)

- In total, in Manica and Sofala, 245,489 square meters remain to be surveyed and cleared. Most of these tasks are straight-forward, although the 26 towers along the Nhamatanda Powerline and the Dondo Railway will be technically challenging and require mechanical demining.
- Three demining operators have already been deployed and are working on the tasks in Chibabava, Mossurize and Nhamatanda districts and are making progress despite the rainy season. If the weather continues to be favorable, all operators report that they can complete these districts by the end of March 2015.
- Of the remaining tasks in Manica and Sofala, only the 5 tasks in Dondo (i.e., approximately 10,000 square meters) will not be completed by 31 March 2015 due to the high-level of the River Pungue. The Dondo tasks are in a river bed at the base of support towers and bridges for a railway that require mechanical excavation that can only be done when the river is dry. Once the water level drops sufficiently, Mozambique believes it will not take more than a month or two to complete these tasks. However, depending upon the water level, work might only begin on the Dondo tasks in August or September 2015.
- The one task in Sussendenga District of Manica Province totals approximately 30,000 square meters. It was identified late last year after a suspected UXO or anti-personnel mine accident. The HALO Trust completed an initial survey in November-December 2014. APOPO has been assigned to conduct additional technical survey and release the area. APOPO estimates that it will complete this work by the end of February 2015.
- In Inhambane, there are 23 areas that total approximately 44,000 square meters of area suspected to contain anti-personnel mines. These had previously been reported as areas difficult to demine due to high water levels. However, based on last year's assessment, Mozambique's National Demining Institute (IND) believes these areas can be released this year through a combination of technical survey and clearance. The IND is monitoring the water level and hopes to dispatch a team once the areas are dry enough to complete technical survey and clearance. The IND hopes to have these areas completed no later than September 2015 or sooner if the water level allows.

The above demining tasks are all the known areas remaining in the country. As of January 2015, the demining capacity in Mozambique has been reduced because there are currently not sufficient tasks for all deminers. The IND and the UNDP estimate that sufficient financial resources exist to complete the remaining work in 2015 should Mozambique receive no-cost extensions from existing donors.



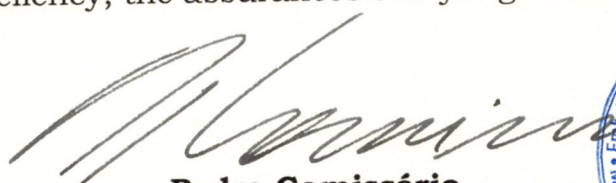
In summary, provided the weather stays favorable, all known areas in Mossurize, Chibabava and Nhamatanda Districts should be addressed by the end of March 2015.

The Government of Mozambique is planning to announce the completion of these tasks on 4 April 2015, with a celebratory ceremony to follow in the same month. What will remain after the end of March are the tasks in Inhambane Province and Dondo District. As noted, the IND is optimistic that these areas could be addressed by the end of September 2015 and certainly no later than the end of November 2015.

While Mozambique regrets that it has missed its 31 December 2014 deadline, our hope is that this will not diminish what amounts to an incredible achievement for the Convention. After more than two decades of efforts, what was once one of the most mine-affected countries on earth is now extremely close to declaring that all areas identified as dangerous due to anti-personnel mines are now again fit for normal human activity.

Once again, Mozambique is committed to maintaining a high degree of transparency with the States Parties regarding its final efforts to comply with its Article 5 obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We would be pleased to provide any additional clarifications and to report regularly on our progress.

Please, accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

  
**Pedro Commissário**  
*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative*

