

## **RESTRICTED**

### **PRESENTATION ON ZIMBABWE UPDATE FOR ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION**

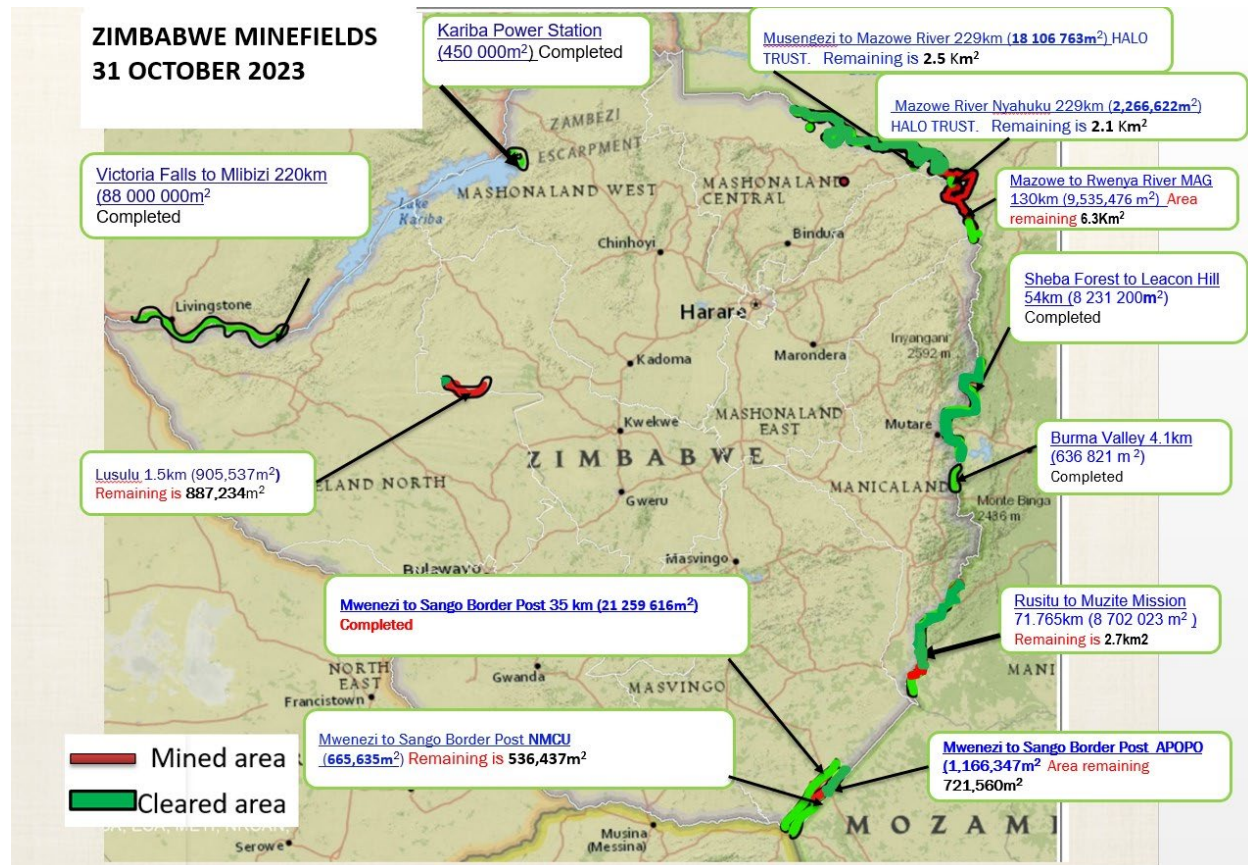
#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Zimbabwe hosted the National Stakeholders Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining period 24-26 January 2023. This was facilitated by the ISU with funding from the EU. This was a high profile event comprising of Mine Action Stakeholders from cross the globe including Government officials and embassies accredited to Zimbabwe. The Dialogue was opened and closed by the Honourable Minister of Defence who took the opportunity to unveil the Revised National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2018-2025 and also the Revised Communication and Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2019-2025

2. Remarkable progress has been observed towards the completion of all clearance work in the country. Although the Centre remains hopeful, but doubtful of meeting its 2025 deadline due to setbacks experienced in 2023 unless donors pour the operators with funds to expand their capacity.

**Progress To Date**

**Map showing the minefields and remaining challenges**



3. As at 31 October 2023, the area cleared since independence amounts to **294,13 km<sup>2</sup>** which translates to **94.7%** total area released. The remaining contamination is at **16,53 km<sup>2</sup>** translating to **5.3%** to be tackled up to December 2025. This year's land release is **1,94 km<sup>2</sup>** which translate to **30.4%** of the year's target.

4. The target for this year's demining calendar land release figure was **6,385,766m<sup>2</sup>**. The reduction or in some cases total withdrawal of funding to some of the operators leading to laying off a number of deminers greatly affected the 2023 target.

Note: For the progress I refer you to the excel sheet showing the current state of our demining programme.

## **RESTRICTED**

### **Clearance Methods, Tools And Equipment**

5. Zimbabwe is using mechanical clearance, Mine Detection Dogs (MDD) and manual demining techniques. We have integrated a Micro excavator for mechanical clearance to HALO Trust and a GPZ 7000 detector for manual clearance to APOPO, MAG and HALO Trust. The objective is to expedite the excavation process, lower the risk of accidents occurring during deminer excavation and replace the need for Missing Mine Drills (MMDs) which typically cause delays in the clearance process.

### **Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)**

6. Operators continue to conduct EORE sessions in their areas of operations. The NMCU finally managed to conduct its annual Mine Risk Education Music Galas which attracted approximately 1500 people mainly woman and the youths both boys and girls. EORE has shown great impact in reducing the number of new injuries.

### **Factors That Affected Smooth Flow of Demining Operations**

7. Zimbabwe faced some setbacks especially in 2023 mainly due to:
- a. The operators' capacity reduction due to reduction in funding leading to laying off of demining teams.
  - b. At some stage around June to August, the programme painted a gloomy picture. As at now the future looks bright.
  - c. The unreliable NMCU demining equipment at the beginning of the 2023 demining calendar although this was addressed during the course of the year.

### **Look Forward**

8. I am happy to note that:
- a. The 2024 – 2025 demining calendars looks bright.
  - b. HALO Trust, MAG and NPA have secured a boost in funding to take them to 2025 although more is required to increase their capacities up to completion.

## **RESTRICTED**

- c. ZIMAC will continue to support APOPO's efforts to secure funding after losing one of its donors.
- d. The NMCU is assured of funding and re-equipping up to the end and beyond to deal with any residual risk contamination.
- e. The Government has placed demining as of high importance and high priority. Everybody is now putting both feet on the deck to ensure the country make strides to fulfil its obligation of Mine Free by 2025

### **Conclusion**

9. Notwithstanding the challenges the country has encountered, ZIMAC is still optimistic that Zimbabwe will fulfill her Article 5 Implementation. Maintaining or increasing the current funding will make this necessary. In order to maintain its momentum and address any residual risk contamination, the Government is also re-equipping the NMCU. The Government remains committed to rid the country of all mines and ERWs to end the suffering of the affected communities.