REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE FOR COMPLETING THE DESTRUCTION OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 5 OF THE CONVENTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Submitted by Zimbabwe

1. On attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited eight (8) distinct mined areas that were laid between 1976-1979 by the Rhodesian Army along the country's borders with Zambia and Mozambique, respectively. The initial contamination before re-survey was 511,050,000 square metres. By the end of 2024, Zimbabwe had managed to release 55,819,413 square metres, with 11,999,499 square metres remaining.

2. The Government of Zimbabwe remains concerned with the existence of minefields along the country's border. As such, since independence to date, the Government has made every effort to rid the country of these minefields which continue to injure, maim and in worst cases, kill both humans and livestock. Efforts by the Government include provision of funding for mine action and continuous mobilisation of assistance from the international community before and after the country became a State Party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention ("the Convention").

3. Zimbabwe has been granted five extension periods. During each of these extension periods, notable progress was made by Zimbabwe in acquiring a clearer understanding and addressing its remaining challenge. The fifth and current extension period expires on 31 December 2025. One of the conditions for granting the fifth extension period was for Zimbabwe to come up with a National Strategic Plan (NSP) for the period 2018-2025, which was done with assistance from GICHD, and successfully launched a revised NSP January 2023.

4. The resurvey of all minefields in the country during the fourth extension period enabled the country to have an accurate figure of the remaining contamination, making it easy to then come up with the NSP. Zimbabwe now talks with certainty of the remaining contamination.

5. Demining organisations in Zimbabwe have fluctuating capacities. Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and APOPO resumed demining operations much later than scheduled in the fifth extension request. MAG commenced operations in December 2018 while APOPO commenced operations in January 2021 instead of January 2018, in spite of having signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2016. APOPO maintained its deminers at 36 from January to February 2025 and terminated all operations and activities on 31 of March 2025 due to the withdrawal of the United States (US) funding. The HALO Trust reduced its capacity from 175 to 133 deminers, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) has maintained its capacity of 80 deminers, the National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU) has restructured its teams from 150 to 112 deminers. MAG commenced with 45 deminers, with the number to be reduced to 27 in the middle of the year 2025. Despite funding challenges, Zimbabwe is committed and looks forward to achieving completion of its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

6. The Government of Zimbabwe has provided US $4 million[1] to Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC) and NMCU during the last extension period. Over and above this figure, the government extended an additional US$2 million this financial year[2].

[1] Zimbabwe's revised request submitted on 6 August 2025 indicated that "The Government of Zimbabwe provided over two million United States Dollars (US $2 million) to ZIMAC and NMCU during the last extension period." This figure was corrected by Zimbabwe to read "US $4 million".
[2] Please note that this sentence does not appear in Zimbabwe's revised request submitted on 6 August 2025 and has been added by Zimbabwe in the executive summary submitted to the 22MSP.

7. The drafting and approval of National Mine Action Standards that included updates on land release process and further alignment with International Mine Action Standards also ensured Zimbabwe responded to the decision of the States Parties on its 2014 extension request. These achievements have enabled Zimbabwe and its operators to re-survey mined areas under its jurisdiction and develop a work plan to deal with an accurate figure of remaining contamination. The total area processed by Non-Technical Survey (NTS), Technical Survey (TS) and clearance during the period 2018 to December 2024 was 55,819,413 square metres. During the extension period Zimbabwe also completed clearance on the Sheba Forest to Lincon Hill, Rusitu to Muzite Mission and Crook's Corner to Sango Border Post (Ploughshare) and half of Musengezi to Mazowe River minefields. This has resulted in increased business opportunities in areas of agriculture, tourism, mining, game ranching and industrial sites. On the social aspect, local inhabitants living adjacent to cleared minefields now freely access water sources, have ample grazing land for their domestic animals and travel across lands to visit their relatives without risking their lives and limbs.

Requested Period of Extension

8. Zimbabwe now has a clear picture of the remaining contamination in areas under its jurisdiction. The termination of service by APOPO in March 2025 left Zimbabwe with three international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the NMCU doing demining operations. The current work plan will be periodically updated and based on current capacities of demining operators; Zimbabwe should be able to complete its Article 5 obligations in 5 years.

9. Zimbabwe now seeks a five (5) year extension from 31 December 2025 to 31 December 2030, during which it is envisaged that, at the current funding levels, clearance would most likely be completed.

10. The five-year period requested is the maximum period expected to complete the task, based on projected reductions in funding and capacities.

11. The revised strategic plan shall be integrated into the 2026-2030 national development plan. Mine Action is being integrated into the National Development Strategy (NDS 2) that will see it being aligned with broader national development priorities. NDS 2 should be finalised latest by the end of 2025 to commence implementation in 2026.

Land Release

12. There will be no further re-surveys through NTS on all tasks. A standardised approach for all operators has been designed where technical survey (TS) lanes will be used to breach across the minefield depth. Once all mine lanes are established, deminers then follow the hazard therefore, the area uncleared will be released through reduction.

13. Zimbabwe does not have any suspected hazardous areas under its jurisdiction. Land release methodologies are selected based on the type of minefield being worked on e.g., the cordon sanitaire requires full clearance and this is allocated to manual and mechanical clearances whilst ploughshare minefields require employment of TS, full and targeted clearance, hence the use of Mine Detection Dogs (MDDs). Dogs are normally employed on fairly open and flat ground whilst manual clearance is reserved for thickly vegetated steep slope areas.

14. Vigorous land release activities by the operators during the period of the fifth extension period, reduced the figure to 11,999,499 square metres as of 31 December 2024. Zimbabwe and its international partners have released 55,819,413 square metres, representing 96.2% of all Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA). The challenge remaining as of January 2025 was 11,999,499 square metres and is summarised on Table 1 below.

Table 1. Contamination level as of January 2025

	Mined Area	Linear Distance Kilometres (km)	Area Metres squared (m^2)	Clearance Organisation
1	Musengezi to Mazowe River	229	1,809,661	HALO Trust
2	Mazowe River to Rwenya River	130	8,562,236	MAG, NPA & HALO Trust
3	Sango Border Post to Mwenezi River	35	830,239	NMCU & APOPO
4	Lusulu	1.50	797,363	NMCU
Total		**395.5**	**11,999,499**	

15.The below information explains how Zimbabwe demining operations have reached stated remaining area of 11,999,499 square metres as at 31 December 2024.

Activity	Square metres (m^2)
Total area at start of fifth extension request	61,793,990
Released during the extension period	55,819,413
Additional areas as per annex C	6,024,922
Total area remaining	11,999,499

16.A work plan based on projected reductions in funding and capacities has been developed for the period of the extension, as shown on Table 2 below. These figures are based on projected reductions in funding and capacities. The Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC) will revise the work plan at the start of each year, so that the plan remains relevant and more accurate during the extension period. The revised plan will be reported on an annual basis through Zimbabwe's Article 7 Transparency Report as well as during Convention meetings. A detailed work plan covering the period 2025-2030 is attached as Annex B.

Table 2. Projected Annual Clearance Work Plan during the Extension Period, Including 2025 (in m^2)[3]

Minefields	Operators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Remaining 2024
Musengezi to Mazowe river	HALO Trust	815,000	900,000	94,661				**1,809,661**
Mazowe River to Nyahuku	HALO Trust			805,339	900,000	459,495		**2,164,834**
Nyahuku to Nyamapanda	NPA	2,500,000	441,201					**2,941,201**
Nyamapanda to Rwenya river	MAG	331,000	277,000	277,000	277,000	277,000	277,000	**3,456,201**
	NPA		198,201	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	

[3] NB. Musengezi to Rwenya is an entire minefield; however, the minefield was sub divided into segments and allocated to operators (HALO Trust has portions i.e., Musengezi to Mazowe river and Mazowe River to Nyahuku, on the other hand, NPA is working on the Nyahuku to Nyamapanda stretch, and finally MAG is working on the Nyamapanda to Rwenya river stretch).

	HALO Trust					350,000	350,000	
Mwenezi river to Sango Border Post	NMCU	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	130,239	**830,239**
Lusulu	NMCU	84,000	120,000	149,000	149,000	149,000	149,000	**797,363**
Total	**4**	**3,870,000**	**2,076,402**	**1,676,000**	**1,676,000**	**1,585,495**	**1,116,239**	**11,999,499**

17. Given the closure of APOPO and a now 50% capacity drop for HALO Trust after laying off 15 teams from the initial 30 teams as of March 2024, with no new immediate funding opportunities, the target becomes extremely unattainable by any time before 2030.

Annual Finance

18. The Zimbabwe Government has over the previous years provided funding at the rate of US $500,000 annually for its demining institutions and national clearance operations. This is expected to continue or increase when the country's economic situation improves.

Table 3. Clearance Budget during the Extension Period 31 December 2025 to 31 December 2030 (USD$)

Organisation	Year						Total
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2025-2030
Zimbabwe Government Financial Support (US million dollars)							
NMCU	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	**3.00**
International Donor Financial Support (US million dollars)							
NPA	3.46	2.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	**14.76**
HALO	3.49	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	**28.24**
MAG	2.3	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	**22.3**
Sub-total	9.25	11.85	11.05	11.05	11.05	11.05	**65.3**
Total	**9.75**	**12.35**	**11.55**	**11.55**	**11.55**	**11.55**	**68.3**

19. The US $68.3 million mentioned above covers all mine action pillars. However, the majority of funding is allocated for survey and clearance.

20. The US $0.5 million enshrined in Table 3 above does not include equipment cost for NMCU. This is budgeted for as and when it's necessary. The Government of Zimbabwe has a procurement process within the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act (Chapter 22:23), which regulates all procurement activities. However, any international support in form of demining equipment towards NMCU will be greatly appreciated.

Zimbabwe Programme Funding Status

Ser	Organisation	Funding Required (USD)	Funding Secured (USD)	Shortfall (USD)	Remarks
a.	MAG	$22.3 million	$1.52 million	$20.78 million	
b.	HALO Trust	$28.24 million	$7.03 million	$21.21 million	
c.	NPA	$14.76 million	$3.97 million	$10.79 million	

d.	NMCU	$3 million	$3 million	Nil	
e.	**TOTAL**	**$68.3 million**	**$15.52 million**	**$52.78 million**	

21. Currently MAG has $1,517,055. If the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) funding remains at current level (with small increase each year to account for inflation), MAG would require an estimated additional $1.5 million (with yearly increase) to increase capacity from 4 to 6 manual teams. One team will be reduced during the course of 2025 and completion of the southern Reinforced ploughshare minefield section of the Area of Operations (AoO) is earmarked for the end of 2030.

22. NPA anticipate the amount of $3.13 million annually with potential increase from its donors. If additional funds are available, NPA's aim is to increase from 6 to 10 manual teams and to add 4 more MDDs.

23. To finish the AoO in 5 years HALO Trust would need an average of 16 manual teams per year, which results in an uplift of funding by $1,371,328 per year. To complete the target HALO Trust would need $4,737,942.5 annually.

24. The Government of Zimbabwe will continue to fund the NMCU programme at $0.5 million on yearly basis.

25. The Government of Zimbabwe remains committed to carry out its Article 5 obligations and the progress achieved can be seen in the following factors:

    a. Low accident rates among civilians.
    b. Low accident rates among demining operators.
    c. No security risks in the country for operations.
    d. High impact of cleared land for socio-economic development of communities, local and international businesses.
    e. Known contamination level with a clear plan, known capacities and resources to achieve these obligations.
    f. Demobilisation strategy being implemented by demining organisations.