

Thank you Co- chair

Uganda has landmine contamination mainly in two Regions. Northern and Western and at a less extent in the North Eastern. There are three affected Districts in the North, three in the West and two in the North Eastern.

Due to rebel conflicts in these areas AP mines have been used on an adhoc basis by the rebels. They are laid individually by withdrawing rebels in houses, granaries, foot-paths to water sources or schools for purposes of instilling fear in the population. The use of AP mines in the areas mentioned above has caused a lot of death and injuries to the people. It has disrupted the social and economic life of the affected communities.

Plans:

Plans are underway to remove all the mines in areas mentioned above, but with Northern Region its not possible now because of the ongoing conflict. In the West, however, it is possible to commence demining activities since peace has returned. Nonetheless, the UPDF (Uganda Peoples Defence Forces) does not have the capacity to carry out the clearance, We need assistance.

Progress:

UPDF has acquired mine clearance systems. But these systems have got their own limitations. They cannot operate in mountainous areas and cannot operate off-road. The Ministries of Defence and Health have therefore embarked on a major mine awareness campaign to reduce the risk of injuries in the affected communities.

The measures include:

- Landmine awareness training of trainers
- Community sensitization targeting community leaders
- Distribution of sensitization materials – booklets and posters

As a result, increased number of mines and UXOs have been reported and removed.

Priorities:

Uganda has limited mine clearance capacity and yet the work is enormous. Therefore there is need for assistance at the moment to get the work done.