



## **PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE V OF THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**

***Statement to the Eight Meeting of the Standing Committees  
on 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland.***

**Mr. Martin Owor**  
Commissioner,  
Department for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Kampala, Uganda

*(Slide 1)* Mr. President, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Uganda has never wavered on its commitment to the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty and to the States Parties. During the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties, we indicated that Uganda would not seek for extension, rather we shall remain steadfast and employ all possible resources in our disposal towards meeting our treaty obligations.

Since that time, much work has been done and achievements have been made. Technical survey of suspected mined areas has been conducted, hundreds of items of UXO and small arms ammunition disposed of, general mine action assessments and revisits to the suspected hazardous areas undertaken, quality assurance and quality control measures instituted, and cleared or discredited land released to the local communities and authorities.

*(Slide 2)* The mine action assessment in search of mined areas had been completed.

*(Slide 3)* Of the 428 suspected hazardous areas, 426 areas are expected to contain unexploded ordnance and not landmines. 244 of those hazardous areas have been cleared, 40 are being worked on, leaving 109 areas to be cleared of unexploded ordnance.

Also last year, we declared the identification of a suspected mined area in the Agoro Mountains in Kitgum District near the border with Southern Sudan. Since then, another suspected mined area has been identified in the same district in an area known as Ngomoromo.

*(Slide 4)* This is the suspected mined area in the Agoro Mountains that is approximately 5 kms. long.

*(Slide 5)* This is the other suspected mined areas in Ngomoromo. The size of the suspected mined area is approximately 4 kms. long.

*(Slide 6)* The two suspected mined areas are assessed to be of low impact. Nevertheless, Uganda fully respects its obligations to the States Parties and is in the process of clearing these suspected mined areas. The technical survey of these two mined areas, including the related marking and fencing work, is expected to be completed by mid July this year. Maximum effort has been put in place to clear the two areas as soon as possible and in accordance with international mine action standards. Currently, 66 percent of the national demining capacity has been deployed to these areas and despite difficulties in accessing the said areas due to the road network and remoteness of these two mined areas along the Sudanese border, logistical problems and harsh weather conditions, 55 percent of the expected work to be done has been completed.



The National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) have been approved and published by the NMASC. Chapter 10 of the NMAS provides for a land release model and standard which is being implemented to deal with the remaining SHAs.

*(Slide 7)* MRE messages in Uganda have been focused on UXOs in addition to landmines reason being that UXOs/ERWs pose a bigger threat to the population than landmines. Through the support of the Danish Demining Group, 6 MRE teams have delivered risk education in 105 primary schools and 44 villages reaching a total of 19,445 persons. Combined with the effort of the other mine action partners, like UNDP, CPAR, AVSI, and WVI, the number of dead and injured due to UXOs/landmines went down from 11 deaths and 51 injured in 2006 to 4 deaths and 4 injured in 2009.

*(Slide 8)* A comprehensive MRE and victim assistance assessment of western Uganda was conducted together with Handicap International. We were also privileged to host her Royal Highness, Princess Mary of Denmark, who visited northern Uganda and not only detonated an antitank mine while she was there but, more importantly, added her voice in emphasizing the importance of humanitarian mine action in facilitating return and resettlement.

*(Slide 9)* The National Mine Action Programme, supported mainly by the UNDP, is led by government, through the Office of the Prime Minister. Efforts are being undertaken to further mainstream the National Mine Action Programme by integrating it into the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Center (NECOC). The NECOC is the main organ being developed to allow the Office of the Prime Minister to effectively coordinate all disaster risk reduction efforts including reducing the threat of ERWs and landmines.

Financial assistance from the UNDP and other donors to the Uganda Mine Action Programme, like Austria, Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, and others are very much appreciated. However, increased allocation in the mine action budget line in the national budget is being advocated to demonstrate government commitment towards ownership of the national mine action programme.

*(Slide 10)* Mr. President, as you can appreciate, everything possible is being done by the Government of Uganda with the support of UNDP and other mine action partners to fulfil our treaty obligations. Clearing the 2 mined areas in accordance with International Mine Action Standards and handing these areas over to local communities for agricultural use takes primary importance. We are working closely with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining who through the generous support of the European Union, through a joint action

implemented by the ISU, is sending an expert to help us in the preparation of our declaration for completion.

Beyond the achievement of the Article 5 obligations, plans are underway to phase mine action assets and capacities to the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Center so as to consolidate our disaster preparedness and response capacity. Uganda shall also remain with the challenges posed by ERWs and the need to increase engagement towards MRE and the provision of direct physical and rehabilitation support to survivors.

*(Slide 11)* We therefore appeal to our donors to continue supporting us until we have completed our objectives of having the former IDPs not only returned and resettled fully in their communities of origin but cultivating the land which used to be littered with ERWs, eliminating deaths and injuries arising from ERWs and landmines, and for those who have survived to be assisted in making a productive contribution to society.

In closing, Mr. President, allow me to say that Uganda will be able to fulfill its obligations under Article 5 by 1 August 2009. We look forward to seeing you in Cartagena with Uganda achieving full compliance with the support of States Parties.

*(Slide 12)* Thank you, Mr. President.



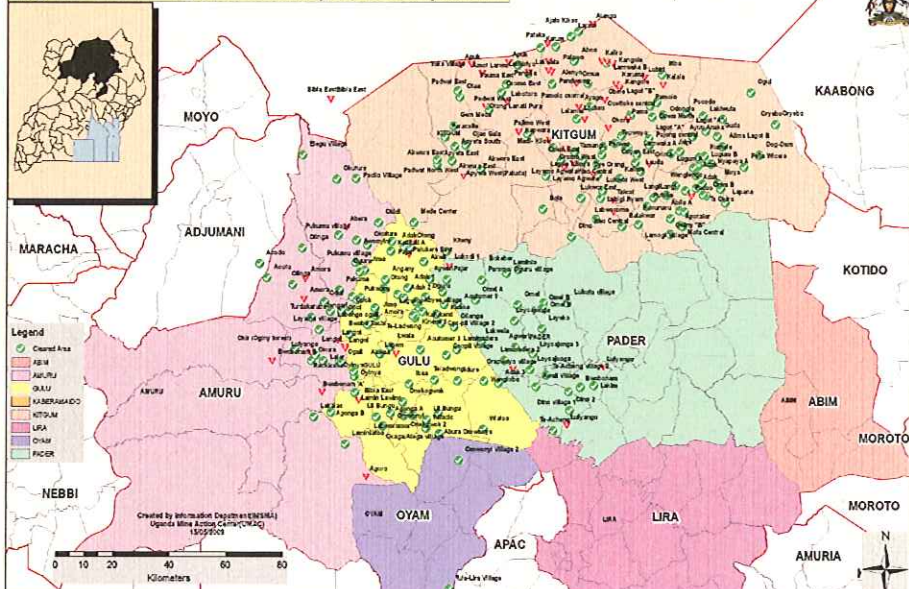
# Republic of Uganda



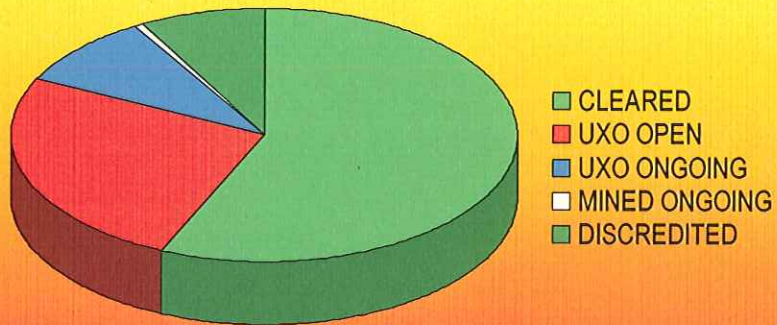
## Progress Reporting Since the 9MSP

Presented during the Meetings of Standing Committees  
25-29 May 2009  
Geneva, Switzerland

Map of Northern Uganda showing clearance patterns



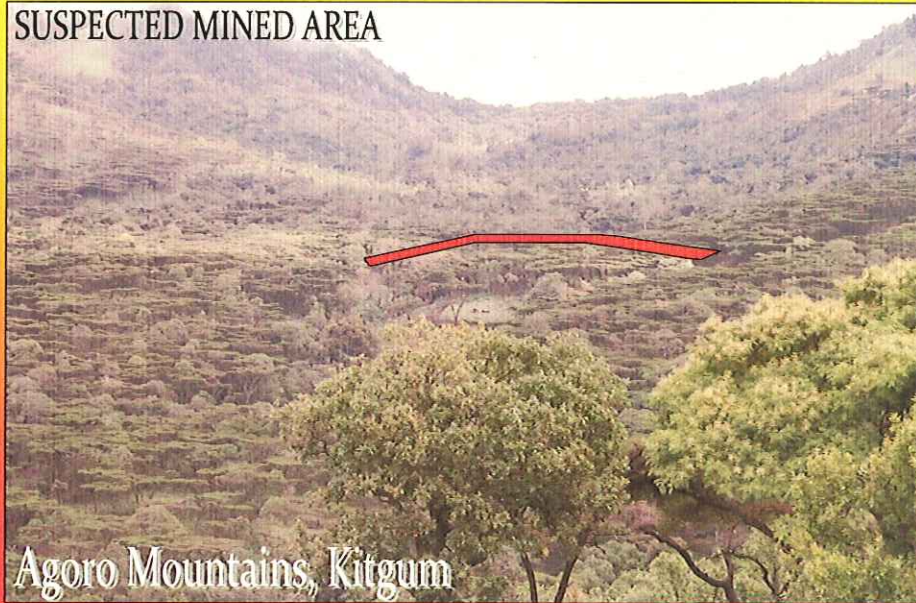
# CLEARANCE PROGRESS as of MAY 2009



CLEARED	UXO AREA OPEN	UXO AREA ONGOING	MINED AREA ONGOING	DISCREDITED
244	109	40	2	35



## SUSPECTED MINED AREA



Agoro Mountains, Kitgum





SUSPECTED MINED AREA



Ngomoromo, Kitgum



- **Uganda is in the process of clearing the two suspected mined areas under its jurisdiction and control**
- **66 percent of the national demining capacity deployed to deal with the two suspected mined areas**
- **National Mine Action Standards approved and published by the National Mine Action Steering Committee**
- **Land release model and standard being put in place to deal with the remaining SHAs**

## **MRE Progress**



- **MRE messages have been focused on UXOs in addition to landmines as this poses a bigger threat to the population**
- **6 MRE teams have delivered risk education in 105 primary schools and 44 villages reaching a total of 19,445 persons broken down as follows: 1,468 men, 1,699 women, 8,495 boys and 7,783 girls**
- **Number of dead and injured due to UXOs/landmines went down from 11 deaths and 51 injured in 2006 to 4 deaths and 4 injured in 2009**



- **Comprehensive MRE/VA assessment of Western Uganda**
- **Her Royal Highness, Princess Mary of Denmark, visited northern Uganda to help advocate on the importance of humanitarian demining to facilitate return and resettlement**



## **Institutional Strengthening Progress**



- **National Mine Action Programme being integrated into the National Emergency Coordination and Operation Center**
- **Increase in the allocation of funds to the mine action budget line in the National Budget advocated**

## **Future Plans**



- **Increase engagement on MRE and Victim Assistance**
- **Phased integration of demining assets and capacities to the National Emergency Coordination and Operations Centre**

**Uganda will be mine-impact free by  
1 August 2009!**



UMAC Team 7 Ngomoromo

**THANK YOU**

