

**Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel
Mines and on Their Destruction**

25 November 2013

Original: English

Thirteenth Meeting

Geneva, 2-5 December 2013

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5

**Request for extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
article 5 of the Convention**
Executive summary

Submitted by Mozambique*

Introduction

1. The landmine challenge in Mozambique is the result of two distinct phases of conflict:

(a) Between 1964 and 1974, large barrier minefields and defensive minefields during the national liberation struggle against colonialism.

(b) Between 1975 and 1992, mines were used in war of destabilization war supported by Rhodesia and the South Africa Apartheid Regime.

2. Mozambique was one of the first countries to sign the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in December 1997. Mozambique ratified the Convention on 25 August 1998 and the Convention entered into force for Mozambique on 1 March 1999. At the time Mozambique ratified the Convention, it was well known that Mozambique had one of the world's most severe challenges as concerns emplaced anti-personnel mines. Mine use during the Mozambique's national liberation struggle between 1964 and 1974 and in subsequent internal conflict between 1977 and 1992 resulted in the presence of mined areas in all ten provinces of Mozambique. On 30 March 2000, Mozambique submitted its initial transparency report in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 1 of the Convention originally informing the States Parties of 1,815 areas in Mozambique which, as of 31 August 1999, contained anti-personnel mines or were suspected to contain anti-personnel mines. A landmine impact survey (LIS) commissioned in 2001, while flawed in many respects, provided Mozambique with a post-entry-into-force baseline, with the landmine impact

* Document submitted after the established deadline, without editorial changes, and as soon as received by the Secretariat from the Implementation Support Unit.

survey identifying 1,374 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, totalling 561,689,063 square meters.

What is the status of work conducted to date under Mozambique's national demining programme?

3. Between 2001 and 2006, a total of 68.6 million m² of which 18 million were areas identified by the landmine impact survey and 50.6 million square metres were areas identified by communities and demining operators. During this period 101,420 landmines were located and destroyed, while 98,737 unexploded ordnances were destroyed throughout the country.

4. Under the first four years of extension period from 2009-2012, a total of 983 areas were surveyed and cleared resulting in the release of 28,714,442 square meters of mine suspected area, of which 11 million square meters were areas identified in the 2007/2008 Baseline Assessment and included in the article 5 extension request, while the other 17.5 million square meters were identified through new surveys. During this period, 20,479 landmines and 3,780 items of 737 unexploded ordnances were located and destroyed.

5. In addition to surveys completed as part of the Government's district-by-district approach, the following 8 sites of socio-economic importance were also surveyed to gain a clearer picture of the remaining situation:

- (a) 200 km of the border with Zimbabwe,
- (b) the area around the CahoraBassa dam,
- (c) the Maputo-Komatiport electricity transmission line,
- (d) the Beira Electricity Transmission Line I and Line II,
- (e) the Chicamba Dam in Manica province,
- (f) the Beira-Machipanda railway line,
- (g) the Salamanga railway line in Maputo Province and
- (h) the Limpopo railway line in Gaza province.

6. Utilizing a district-by-district approach, the government was able to declare that implementation of Article 5 of the convention is complete in 103 districts out of a total of 128 districts, meaning there are no known mined areas remaining in these districts. This includes five provinces (Gaza, Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Niassa and Zambezia) out of the ten provinces in the country that are now free of all known mined areas. Since exhaustive surveys of all communities have already been completed in 97 per cent of all districts, the National Demining Institute is confident that no new large mine suspected areas will be discovered, as occurred during the first extension period.

7. As of August 2013, there are 221 suspected hazard areas equal to 8,266,841 million square meters that remain to be cleared and released by the 2014 deadline. Of the total amount of remaining area to be released, 100 suspected hazard areas covering 4,019,952 square meters present a particular challenge in order to demine before the March 2014 deadline, this includes five border minefields covering 1,077,966 square meters along the Mozambique-Zimbabwe Border.

What are the circumstances that impede Mozambique from destroying all anti-personnel mines in mined areas by its deadline?

8. In 2013, demining of suspected hazard areas in the central region of Mozambique (i.e. Provinces of Sofala, Manica and Tete) was significantly delayed due to several factors that included:

(a) Heavy rains and flooding from January to March 2013, delayed the start of demining operations Manica, Inhambane and Sofala.

(b) Limited availability of mechanical demining assets in the provinces of Manica and Sofala has led to slow progress in a number of demining tasks in the Districts of Cheringoma, Gondola and Nhamatanda.

(c) Insecurity in the District of Chibabava from March until August 2013 led the humanitarian demining operator in the area to suspend operations in the district out of concern for deminers and demining equipment. A concerted action by the Mozambican Security Forces has restored order in the district allowing for the resumption of demining activities.

9. The minefields along the Mozambique-Zimbabwe Border present a particular challenge to demine before the March 2014 deadline for the following reasons:

(a) Dense, complicated minefields - The Border Minefields that were planted by the Rhodesian Security Forces are dense minefields usually about 25 meters in width and contain some minimal metal mines like the R2M2. Where ploughshare fragmentation mines were placed to reinforce the border minefields, it is expected that there will be a lot of metal contamination in the ground, further complicating manual demining.

(b) Accessibility - Of the 74.1 linear km of border minefields that is straddling the border only 19.1 km can be easily accessed from Mozambique. The remaining 51 km is most easily accessed from Zimbabwe and in some areas can only be accessed from Zimbabwe. Much of the border lies on remote and mountainous terrain that makes access difficult.

(c) Lack of clarity where the border is – In some cases, where the minefields start in Zimbabwe and continue into Mozambican territory, it is difficult to determine exactly where the border is since these areas are not well demarcated and border beacons are sometimes located in mine suspected areas.

10. Since the communities along the border regularly cross the border, the impact of the minefields along the border will remain the same if only one side of the border is demined, while the other side remains mined. Close coordination with the Mine Action authorities in Zimbabwe will be required in order to overcome the challenges listed above and alleviate the humanitarian and socio-economic impact of the landmines along the border.

What is the proposed duration for the extension and the reasons for this amount of time?

11. Mozambique is requesting an extension totalling ten months from 1 March 2014 until 31 December 2014, on the basis that:

(a) The additional ten months will focus exclusively on the 100 mine suspected areas covering 4,019,952 square meters that will remain in the three central Provinces of Sofala, Manica and Tete including the 5 minefields that straddle the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border covering a total of 1,077,966 square meters.

(b) It is realistic that, utilizing all available demining assets in Mozambique, all known minefields along the Mozambique side of the border can be cleared in the ten month period, including quality assurance work.

What is Mozambique's plan to fulfil its obligations during the extension period?

12. Of the 221 tasks totalling 8,266,841 million square meters of mine suspected area remaining for clearance and release in Mozambique as of 31 August 2013, it is important to highlight that 100 tasks totalling roughly four million square meters present a particular challenge to demine within the established deadline of 1 March 2014 including five tasks located along the Mozambique-Zimbabwe Border.

13. The demining plan for 2013 will therefore concentrates on those areas in the interior of Mozambique that can be realistically cleared by the original deadline of 1 March 2014.

14. Considering the results of demining in 2012, during which about 8.7 million square meters were cleared by all operators, it can be concluded that Mozambique maintains the capacity and technical resources to complete the clearance of all hazardous areas still remaining in the interior of the Mozambican territory, by the proposed deadline of 31 December 2014. During the remainder of 2013 and the first two months of 2014, the National Demining Institute and demining operators aim to complete demining and surveying in an additional 121 suspected hazard areas releasing an area totalling approximately, 4,246,889 square meters back to communities. This would include the conclusion of demining operations in all known mine suspected areas in the Provinces of Maputo and Inhambane by 1 March 2014.

15. Under the proposed extension period of March to December 2014, all existing demining capacity in Mozambique would then concentrate on clearing the 100 mine suspected areas covering 4,019,952 square meters that will remain in the three central Provinces of Sofala, Manica and Tete including the five minefields that straddle the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border covering a total of 1,077,966 square meters.

What are the financial and technical means available to Mozambique to fulfil its obligations during the extension period?

16. In order to achieve its objective of clearing all known remaining mined areas, the Government of Mozambique will use the demining capacity that already exists in the country, namely the Humanitarian demining operations, commercial demining operators and the demining capacities of the Mozambican Armed Defense Forces. The country currently has four international humanitarian demining operators - APOPO, Handicap International, the HALO Trust and Norwegian People's Aid - to assist the achievement of its objectives in accordance with the country's socio-and economic development plans and the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. In total it is estimated that 13,284,856 USD will be required to demine the remaining mine suspected areas in the Central region of Mozambique including the minefields along the Mozambican border. This includes all associated costs for quality assurance, information management, coordination and training a national capacity that will respond to the threat of residual unexploded ordnances and explosive remnants of war other than landmines that will inevitably remain after the 2014 deadline. In addition to mobilizing the technical and financial resources to resolve the landmine challenge that will remain along the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border during the 2014 extension period, the Government of Mozambique will need the cooperation and assistance of the Government of Zimbabwe. Mozambique is therefore working with the

Government of Zimbabwe to develop a memorandum of understanding between the two countries to support the demining of both sides of the border.
