

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY ZIMBABWE

I. Progress in implementation

1. Zimbabwe reported that in 2017 a total of 6,218,692 square metres known to contain anti-personnel mines was released, including 1,768,118 square metres cancelled, 2,794,713 square metres reduced and 1,655,861 square metres cleared, destroying in the process 30,533 anti-personnel mines, 4 anti-tank mines and 2 items of unexploded ordnance.
2. The Committee observed that the information provided by Zimbabwe on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with annual milestones provided in their 2017 extension request.
3. The Committee welcomed Zimbabwe employing the Guide to Reporting adopted by the Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties (14MSP).

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge

4. The Committee observed that Zimbabwe had provided a high degree of clarity regarding its remaining challenge by providing a list of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines and with this list including the estimated size of each area. Zimbabwe reported that through technical survey the remaining challenge increased by 1,782,579 square meters. Zimbabwe reported that a total of 61,793,990 square meters remain to be addressed in the 7 remaining mined areas. The Committee noted the importance of Zimbabwe continuing to provide information on progress disaggregated according to areas released through clearance, reduction or cancellation.

III. National plans for clearance and survey

5. Zimbabwe provided a detailed work plan in its 2017 extension request leading towards completion by its 31 December 2025 deadline. The work plan indicated how much area, disaggregated by each of the seven remaining CHA, would be released each year according to national land release methodologies.
6. Zimbabwe provided an updated summary of annual milestones to be achieved, indicating that a total of 7,160,645 square metres is to be addressed 2018; 8,013,488 square metres in 2019; 8,337,429 square metres in 2020; 8,987,429 square metres in 2021; 8,865,123 square metres in 2022; 7,973,777 square metres in 2023; 6,727,746 square metres in 2024, and; 5,828,353 in 2025.

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation

7. The Committee recalled in conclusions presented by the Committee to the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties in 2017 that Zimbabwe had drafted and approved its National Strategic Plan, for the period of the extension request, (2017-2025). The Committee further noted that Zimbabwe reported in regards to applying the full range of available means to efficiently and expediently release areas containing anti-personnel mines Zimbabwe was piloting mechanical clearance and the use of animal detection systems. The Committee observed that Zimbabwe's report on these trials have indicated to be positively contributing to the clearance of high metallic areas and deeply buried mines, these are yet to be official approved. The Committee observed that

additional information on Zimbabwe's plans for formally incorporating these tools into their land release methodology would be welcome.

V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them

8. The Committee observed that Zimbabwe had provided updates with respect to a variety of commitments made and milestones contained in its 2017 extension request granted at the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties. The Committee observed that Zimbabwe was complying with the commitments contained in its request.
9. The Committee recalled that in the decision of the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties on Zimbabwe's request, States Parties requested Zimbabwe to provide an update on the relocation of the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre out of military cantonments. The Committee observed that Zimbabwe reported that ZIMAC will be relocated out of the cantonment area once Government allocates funds for purchasing or renting accommodation, with funds for this being sourced by the Ministry of Defence. The Committee noted the progress of actions in accordance to plans and welcomed further updates from Zimbabwe.
10. The Committee further recalled that in its decision on Zimbabwe's extension request the 16MSP noted that the convention would benefit from Zimbabwe submitting to the Committee by 30 April 2019, an updated detailed work plan for the remaining period covered by the extension.

VI. Mine risk reduction

11. Zimbabwe reported that all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines have been marked and warning signs in both respective area languages and English were displayed with replacement of warning signs and their maintenance done on regular basis. Zimbabwe reported risk taking activities are reduced from mine risk-reduction education done by Zimbabwe Army Engineers and all demining organisations in their areas of responsibility.
12. The Committee noted that information on sex and age disaggregated data on beneficiaries of Mine Risk Education would be welcome. The Committee noted the actions taken by Zimbabwe in Mine Risk Education and welcomes further information on its efforts to ensure that these activities are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, coherent with applicable national and international standards, tailored to the needs of mine-affected communities and integrated into ongoing mine action activities, namely data gathering, clearance and victim assistance as appropriate.