

ZAMBIA'S STATEMENT AT THE MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION, GENEVA, 21 – 25 MAY, 2012

Thank you Chair for giving me the floor

Co-chairs,

As you may be aware, Zambia completed destruction of the stockpile of landmines on 20th October, 2004. The total stockpile destroyed by open electric detonations was Three Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Five (3,345) while the total number retained for permitted purposes was Three Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Six (3,346), and have reduced over the years.

These landmines were retained for training purposes. The Zambia Mine Action Centre (ZMAC) intends to undertake a joint verification exercise soon with the military in order to ascertain the exact number of mines still being retained for training.

The training involved covers mine identification and awareness, minefield marking and layout, detection and destruction techniques. The target groups for this training are mainly military personnel preparing for United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKO) deployment, Combat Engineers undergoing mandatory career progression courses, and national and regional military officers undergoing Command and Staff Courses. The estimated number of beneficiaries is around 150 -200 annually.

I further wish to inform you that the detection technique that has been used during this training is the basic hand-held metal detection method. Destruction techniques are limited to open detonation by safety fuse and electric methods by Humanitarian De-miners and EOD Experts as and when ERWs have been located, identified and recommended for destruction.

Currently, Zambia has no plans for further development of detection and clearance techniques which would result in the use of

mines retained under Article 3 due to low levels of threat and other national priorities.

You may, however, wish to note that because of the aforementioned training, Zambia has developed capacity in mine detection. Another major benefit on the usage of retained mines for training has been the cost-effectiveness of ridding the country of mines and UXO as the national capacity has professionally conducted mine clearance in suspected areas across the country at a much reduced cost.

Finally, I wish to assure the meeting that Zambia remains committed to provide additional information to the Standing Committee on mines retained for permitted purposes as soon as the joint verification exercise is completed.

I thank you.