

Zimbabwe

**ZIMAC UPDATE FOR THE MEETING OF INTERSESSIONAL
MEETING OF STANDING COMMITTEES: 21 -25 MAY 2012 -
GENEVA**

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe has remained resolute in her endeavours to fulfil her obligations under Article 5 despite a lot of challenges. Over the last twelve (12) years, Zimbabwe has depended on the military through the National Mine Clearance Squadron for all mine action especially demining and MRE. Since 1999, when the Convention entered into force, Zimbabwe has cleared the **286 km²** minefield on the Northern border with Zambia (Victoria Falls to Mlibizi), a total of **10,48 km²** gaps through the remaining four minefields and is currently carrying out demining on the sixth minefield on the South Eastern part of the country (Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield). **8,72 km²** of this minefield has been covered, bringing the total of cleared mined areas to **305,2 km²** and 198 379 AP Mines recovered and destroyed since entry into force.

Zimbabwe is very clear as to the remaining state of contamination. There are five minefields and three SHA that are yet to be cleared and these cover a total area of **205,85 km²**.

Zimbabwe is engaging the International Community and other State Parties for assistance in order to address the remaining implementation challenges.

CURRENT EFFORTS

The National Mine Clearance Squadron is currently demining the 53 km double stretch Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield on the South Eastern part of the country. The Squadron is currently carrying out QA on the primary minefield and a technical survey on the secondary minefield. Remarkable progress has been recorded in this respect.

You will recall that at the 11MSP in Cambodia, I reported that in 2011, five international organisations had made contacts with ZIMAC through the office of the Chairman of NAMAAZ. Since then some positive developments have taken place. I am happy to report that the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) and ICRC signed an MOU on 14 February 2012. Under this arrangement, the ICRC has offered to provide demining and medical equipment, deminers' protective clothing and Demining Management Training for senior ZNA Engineer officers as well as a Train the Trainer course for junior officers and SNCOs who in turn will train more deminers.

The commitment and dedication by both parties has seen the Demining Management Training taking place in March 2012. The Train the Trainer course commenced on 10 April 2012 and is scheduled to graduate on 24 May 2012. The medical training will commence once the medical equipment arrives. We are exploring further avenues in training EOD, QA & QC Train the Trainer courses by the ICRC. The current assistance by the ICRC, will double the

efforts by the NMC. The GOZ is committed to the success of this partnership, which we hope will last for years to come.

Similarly there have been some positive developments in terms of mine action assistance in Zimbabwe.

a. **HALO Trust.** The 4th of April 2012 witnessed the commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action for the first time in Zimbabwe as well as the signing of the MOU between the GOZ and HALO Trust. This will see HALO Trust carrying out survey and subsequent demining on the North Eastern part of the Country i.e the 335 km stretch Musengezi to Rwenya river minefield. However HALO Trust is still mobilising resources to commence the survey.

b. **NPA.** There has been some progress in the negotiation of the MoU with NPA. Admittedly the process has taken longer than anticipated. The two parties have agreed in principle on the areas to be addressed on the MoU and it is our hope that the MoU will be signed in the near future

C. **Joint Demining.** There are negotiations between Zimbabwe and Mozambique to jointly tackle the demining of the common border between the two countries. The two parties are working on the finer details of how this can be done. Work on the proposed areas will commence once this process has been completed.

EXTENSION REQUEST

Zimbabwe was granted two extension requests and the current extension expires in January 2013. However, the country did not achieve much during these extension periods due to lack of support from the international and donor communities and the financial constraints bedevilling the country.

You will recall that during the 11MSP, I reported that even with international support, a third extension request was unavoidable. Likewise, we have since submitted our third extension request, thanks to the assistance by Juan Carlos, the ISU Mine Action Implementation Specialist. We welcome comments by various stakeholders such as ICBL and ICRC, which will be taken on board and their concerns will be addressed on the final submission.

COCLUSION

In a nutshell, there have been very positive developments in as far as mine action is concerned in Zimbabwe. The dream of seeing Zimbabwe free of mines is fast becoming a reality and its very encouraging. Let me conclude by saying Zimbabwe welcomes any form of mine action support/assistance and remains committed to her obligations under Articles 5 to ensure a mine free Zimbabwe and the world at large.

I thank you

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Director ZIMAC