



Intersessional Standing Committee on mine clearance, the APMBT

June 4th 2008

**Statement by the Government of the Republic of Malawi,
*delivered by Daniel Kuwali***

Thank you co chair,

Malawi reported on the suspicion of mined areas in the 2005 Transparency report indicating that it suspected areas that could contain mines along the border with Mozambique and 33 former MYP camps. A variety of devices were indicated as possible in these areas but also stating that the quantity had not been confirmed. Malawi was suspected of being contaminated by mines and other explosive remnants of war as a result of the spill-over from the Mozambican internal armed conflict. It was also suspected that the former Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP) bases and old refugee camps were affected by landmines and/or unexploded ordnance. As Malawi lately has suffered from the effects of flooding on a regular basis, it was in addition suspected that possible landmines theoretically could have moved during the floods creating additional mine contaminated areas.

Ladies and gentlemen, with reference to the above situation, Malawi would now like to report that with the support of Norwegian People's Aid and UNDP, Malawi has sought clarification in the situation and will formally declare its compliance with obligations under Article 5 of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention to the Ninth Meeting of States Parties. Informally however, I would like to share the following information with you today.

Within the framework of the Completion Initiative and with subsequent financial support from UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norwegian People's Aid has upon the request of the Malawian Government conducted a national landmine and unexploded ordnance survey in Malawi during the period 17 May and 15 December 2007.

Through interviews with representatives of the government, district authorities and traditional leaders, NPA identified 205 localities in Malawi that *could* contain one or more suspected hazardous areas and thus required further investigation.

Through general mine survey and close dialogue with representatives of local communities local authorities and district authorities, 199 out of the 205 targeted locations were officially cancelled for further mine action as no suspected hazardous areas were known to exist in and around these locations.

NPA identified six (6) suspected hazardous areas. In accordance with international mine action standards, NPA cancelled three (3) suspect hazardous areas after the initial technical assessment and one (1) suspect hazardous area was reduced. After further technical assessment, all four (4) of these areas were released in close dialogue with local communities.

With reference to the remaining two areas contained in the districts of Mwanza and Chikwawa, NPA conducted full mine clearance in one suspected hazardous area without finding landmines or other explosive remnants of war. Battle area clearance was carried out in the one (1) remaining suspected area and revealed a small number of unexploded ordnance that subsequently were destroyed. Both locations have, in close dialogue with representatives of the communities and their local authorities, been officially handed over to the local communities as free of landmines and other explosive remnants of war

Subsequently and based on the extensive information and evidence collected, NPA has found that to the best of their knowledge, the mine problem in Malawi is now resolved. In consultation with partners and based on these findings, the Government of Malawi has determined that it is in compliance with its Article 5 obligations and will report that its obligations under Article 5 have been met. A formal announcement including a detailed report stating survey methodology and findings with reference to all the visited areas will be provided to the Ninth Meeting of States Parties in November 2008.

I thank you,