

PRESENTATION OF UGANDA ON MINE CLEARANCE, MINE RISK EDUCATION AND AT THE AP MINE BAN TREATY STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS, 22ND TO 23RD JUNE 2010, GENEVA

Madam President, Ambassador Susan Ecky, the Co-Chairs, the Director of the Geneva Center for Humanitarian De-mining, Ambassador Stephen Husy, Representatives of the UN, Representatives of NGOs, Donors' Representatives present, the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines (ICBL), distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I bring you warm greetings from Uganda.

Before I proceed, I would like to assure you of Uganda's commitment in implementing the Actions adopted at the Cartagena Second Review Conference of States Parties on Mine clearance. Uganda was granted an extension of three years with in which to clear the remaining known mine fields which exist at Ngomoromo and Agoro hills in Northern Uganda. The extension took effect from 1st August 2009 to 1st August 2012, I am glad to inform you of the steady progress Uganda has achieved over the period of eight months in clearing the mined areas.

Madam President, I now proceed to present to this Meeting, actual progress registered in clearing the two mined areas in Uganda as per the objectives entailed in Uganda's Article Five extension request;

Mechanical clearance of Ngomoromo mined area

As planned, a mine wolf machine was secured from the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) Sudan, the machine has successfully cleared Ngomoromo mined area; a 4 KM long and 35M deep linear mine field containing antipersonnel blast mines Type PMD6, No4, PP M57 and Type 72. Clearance operations were completed in March 2010; a total of 134,673sqm of land was cleared. The National Demining teams are currently engaged in quality assuring the mechanically cleared land before it is handed over to the community, the hand over is expected to take place in August 2010.

Our appreciations to the management of NPA for extending support with the mine wolf and technical staff who were deployed to supervise the operation at Ngomoromo.



The mine wolf machine clearing Ngomoromo mine field in March 2010

Manual Clearance at Agoro hills mined area

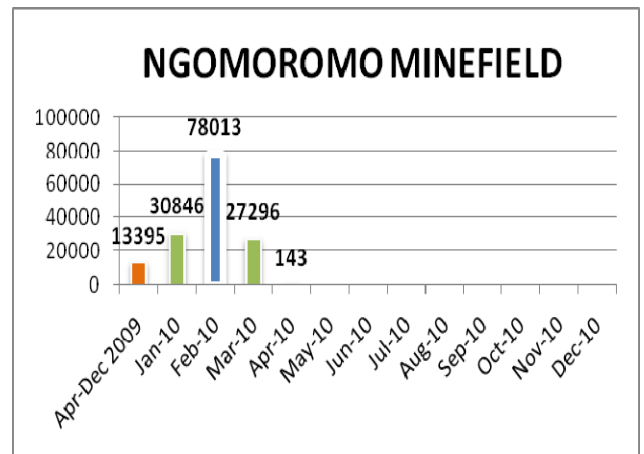
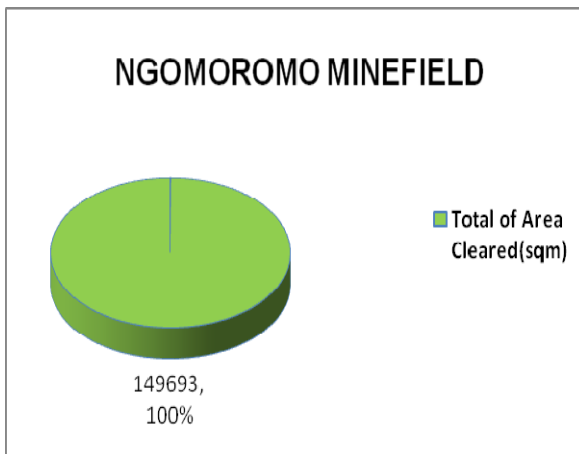
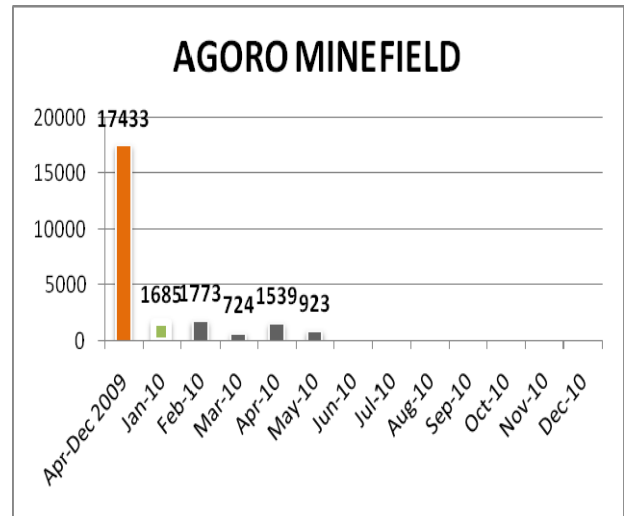
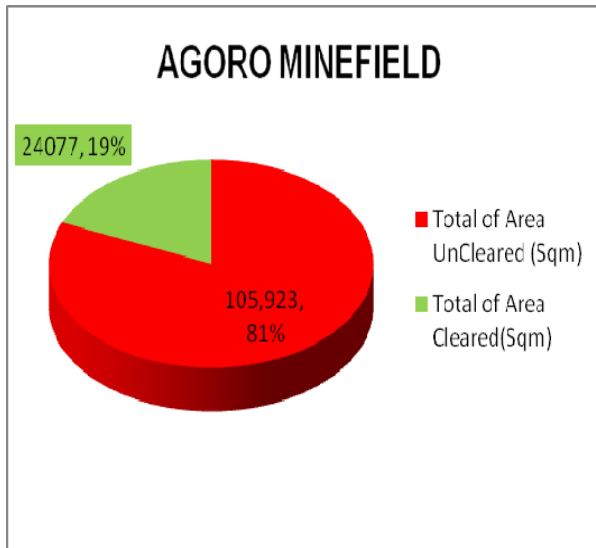
Madam President, clearance operations at the Agoro hills minefield has continued to register good progress, one out of the five identified suspected minefields named "Lote" is completely cleared the handover process of this area is underway. "Lote" minefield measures 12,469 sqm, this area contained 28 T72 Anti Personnel Mines which were successfully retrieved and destroyed. Work in the second minefield of "Ajalikeych" has started and is showing great progress. A total of 09 anti personnel T72 mines have so far been demolished, the total area cleared so far is 6,644 sqm.

The table below provides a statistical summary of the projected and actual clearance by SQMs, it also illustrates the level of clearance accomplish in percentages.

YEAR	Projected Ngomoromo	Projected Agoro	Actual Agoro	Actual Ngomoromo	% Ngomoromo	% Agoro	Mines found - Agoro	Mines Ngomoromo
2009	15,000	12,500	17,433	13,395	89	139	28	140
2010	52,500	85,000	6,644	136,298	259	8	9	83
2011	52,500	32,500	00	00	00	00	00	00
2012	20,000	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
TOTALS	140,000	130,000	24,077	149,693			37	223

The drop in percentage clearance at Agoro from 139% in 2009 to 8% in 2010, which is only expected to raise by the end of the year to about 20% is attributed to heavy rains which have greatly disrupted operations during the first half of 2010 and the delays in deploying the additional 40 de-miners to add to the existing workforce, secondly this area is in a difficult terrain that only favors manual demining.

Madam president, the plan to deploy additional the 40 de-miners to beef up the existing personnel as reported during the second review conference has not been done timely due to funding delays. We are however grateful to the Australian government which is now providing US\$ 920,000 towards the deployment of the training and deployment of the 40 personnel, modalities on the actual release of the funding are being finalized with DDG which will be implementing this project, training of the personnel is expected to commence at the beginning of July followed by actual deployments in August 2010.



Clearance of other Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs) and Nuisance Mines

Removing and destroying other ERWs constitutes majority of the work for the UMAC teams, ERWs have caused most of the reported casualties in Uganda. Explosive ordinance (EOD) work has been carried out by UMAC teams with the technical support from DDG since 2007, this will likely continue beyond the clearance dead line of 1st August 2010 until the entire affected region is free from ERWs and nuisance mines.

Four EOD teams have been formed out of the National demining capacity and these have been carrying out EOD operations in the five Northern Uganda districts of Gulu, Amuru, Pader, Lamwo and Kitgum. While the surveyed 428 suspected hazardous areas, have been cleared of ERWs throughout Northern Uganda, a residual threat still remains, EOD teams will thus continue to be tasked to respond to reported ERWs.

The table below shows a Summary of EOD Performance in 2009/10.

Year	Teams	Devices Found					Villages Covered	Tasks reported and completed tasks	Hours Worked
		APM	ATM	UXO	Small Arms Amour	Air Bomb			
2009	4 Teams	31	9	1,802	6,634	07	772	820	41,379
2010	4 Teams	6	0	1,114	1,092	04	257	380	8,650
Total		37	9	2,916	7,726	11	1,029	1,200	50,029

Plans to finish the remaining task in 2012

The Australian support of USD\$ 920,000 will enable UMAC increase its Demining Personnel by 40, these will be added to the current capacity of 22 to quicken the clearing of Agoro mine fields. On the other hand the personnel currently engaged in quality assurance at Ngomoromo will be added to the Agoro team in August 2010, to further boost the clearance of Agoro mine fields, increased numbers will double the current clearance rate and this should enable Uganda meet her August 2012 clearance deadline.

The existing UNDP support to the National Mine Action Programme in general is expected to continue as well as the partnership with DDG and other development partners, this should enable the programme sustain its operations both in mine clearance, explosive Ordinance disposal (EOD), mine risk education and victim assistance.

Madam President, I should use this opportunity to appeal to our development partners to continue providing Uganda the required support to enable Uganda realize her goal of a mine/ERWs free country.

Mine Risk Education

Before I conclude; allow me make mention of what we are doing in the area of mine risk education as a critical element towards the safety of the population. MRE is being conducted in Uganda in the two affected regions of the country by the Danish Demining Group and Handicap International in partnership with the local based NGO AMNET-R. The MRE activities are implemented in coordination the Ugandan Mine Action Centre. The need for MRE in the Northern Uganda region is directly linked to the Return and Resettlement Plan of Government to ensure the safety of the returning IDP population.

Thank you for the Kind attention

Woboya Vicent

NATIONAL COORDINATOR/UGANDA MINE ACTION PROGRAMME
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