



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**UGANDA PRESENTATION ON ARTICLE FIVE PROGRESS
AT 10 MSP, 29 NOV - 03 DEC 2010 IN GENEVA**

Mr. President,

At the outset, The Ugandan delegation congratulates you for assuming office as the 10MSP President and we pledge our support to you.

Uganda delegation would also like to express its appreciation to, Ambassador Susan Eckey, Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs, the Director and staff of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Representatives of the UN, NGOs, and Development Partners for their various positive roles in organizing this 10MSP.

My delegation also extends sincere thanks to the Government and the people of Switzerland for hosting this meeting and their warm hospitality.

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Uganda's statement on Article Five is majorly an update on progress in clearing known minefields at Ngomoromo and Agoro hills in Northern Uganda; and efforts in achieving the target of August 2012.

Mr. President, with the acquisition and deployment of a Minewolf machine provided by the Norwegian Peoples Aid-Sudan, the initial surveyed 4 km minefield stretch at Ngomoromo in Kitgum district was successfully completed in March 2010 and handed over to the community. A total of 141,082 sqm of land was cleared, 224 antipersonnel mines were destroyed; these included types PMD6, T72, M57, M7, No 10, and No 4.

After the successful clearance of the initial 4 km minefield at Ngomoromo, new reports from the communities emerged suspecting presence of additional mined areas nearby. A team of deminers has been deployed to undertake non technical survey in these areas. If confirmed, clearance operations will commence.

Mr. President, I am happy to report to this meeting, the steady progress registered in clearing confirmed four minefields at Agoro hills. The first of the four areas at Lotte was cleared and handed over to the local community by the Minister for Relief Disaster Preparedness and Refugees on 20th Nov 2010. A total of 9,900 sqm were cleared, 28 antipersonnel mines type 72 were destroyed. Sincere appreciations to

our partners, particularly UND and DDG for the support provided in this regard. We further appeal to them to continue with this support.

Clearance operations are ongoing at the second minefield named Ajalikech measuring 18,000 sqm. To date, 12,443 sqm has been cleared with 22 antipersonnel mines type 72 destroyed. Ajalikech will be followed by clearance of Mica measuring 20,000 sqm, and Lomwaka A measuring 50,000 sqm at the lower side of Agoro hills.

Mr. President, Uganda appreciates the contribution from the Government of Australia, of USD 900,000 towards the training and deployment of additional 40 deminers to scale up the clearance efforts at Agoro. The deminers have now been trained, equipped and deployed with this contribution under the technical supervision by Danish Demining Group.

In order to assure the safety of affected communities, we have continued to carry out explosive ordnance disposal. The national EOD teams have conducted EOD operations in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Lamwo, Pader, Lira, Kasese, Amuru and parts of the West Nile region. Over the past 11 months, in these operations 7 antipersonnel-, 2 antitank mines and 1,432 ERW items have been destroyed.

Mr. President, In support of the population safety, mine risk education is carried out in the affected regions of Uganda by NGOs. We particularly appreciate the efforts of Handicap International and DDG in this regard and appeal for sustained capacities to deliver MRE, in all the affected communities. Community liaison on risks associated with ERW and mines, traditionally carried out by demining teams, is not sufficient.

Mr. President, whereas Uganda is determined to achieve her Article Five deadline in August 2012, there are challenges in the pursuit of this objective that require redress.

While the support from the Australian Government has enabled the deployment of 40 additional deminers, clearing all the mined areas mentioned within the time frame, will require doubling the current personnel and equipment capacities, bringing in appropriate machines for clearing low land minefields, and completing the non technical surveys to determine the extent of affected areas. Mr. President, through your chair, we appeal for more support from our development partners towards our efforts.

Secondly, the UNDP Country Office recently reviewed its stakes towards the mine action programme, producing a strategic document for a three-year period 2010 to 2012. In this document, UNDP plans to reduce funding for mine action significantly during the period 2011 and 2012, effectively withdrawing from direct implementation support. This will, in our view, affect the 2012 target if no alternative resources are made available and therefore call for additional external support to bridge this gap.

Mr. President, in conclusion Uganda is close to Article Five. I therefore take this opportunity to thank development partners and indeed new partners for their support.

Finally, my delegation strongly support the proposal for the establishment of the Standing Committee on Research and Assistance. We remain open to work with Zaire on this proposal.

Thank you.

Woboya Vicent
SENIOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY
COORDINATOR, UGANDA MINE ACTION PROGRAMME
November 29, 2010 /GENEVA