

~~Mr. Etsay Gabreselassie~~ ETHIOPIA  
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**First of all congratulations to you MR. President on your election as a president**

Mr. President

Ethiopia is one of the most heavily mine affected country in the world. The mines were the result of successive conflicts we had both internally and externally with our neighbors. Ethiopia is well aware of the impact imposed by landmines and Therefore, Ethiopia signed APMBC in 1997, ratified in 2004 and entered in to force in 2005.

To comply with its obligations and to create safer ground, Ethiopia has conducted mine clearance and mine risk education since 1995 using its military units and since 2002 in a new form after reorganizing a new civilian entity. As data was crucial for mine action, we also have established a baseline date through a countrywide socio-economic impact survey.

So far, Ethiopia has utilized 80 million USD. Of which about 30% of the budget was a contribution from the government and the other 70% from various donors. Our biggest donors are the EU NPA and UNDP.

In compliance to the Ottawa treaty, Ethiopia has been reporting on article 7 transparency report every year since 2008. Our obligation in article 4 to destroy stockpile was completed in 2009 slightly before the deadline. Landmine clearance and mine risk education of article 5 is underway to meet the deadline by 2015. Progress

report on the application of Cartagena action plan 2010 to 2014 was submitted to ISU in august 2010.

Efforts are ongoing by the social and labor affairs of Ethiopia and ICRC in implementing national plan for action for people with disabilities including mine victims

MR. President

In reference to the Capacity development of the Mine action program in Ethiopia,

Ethiopia owns 5 manual clearance teams where each team consists of 172 personals. We also own 17 mine detection dog teams, 6 ground preparation machines and 5 technical survey and rapid response teams with community liaisons attached to them.

Based on the national wide base line data, 1.9 million people from 1,492 communities and 1,916 suspected hazardous areas were affected by the impact of landmines. This means 10 out of the 11 regions of the country are affected. Even though the 10 regions are affected, the majority of the problem lies on the three severely affected regions. From a 2 year survey only, 1, 295 victims of mine

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incidents were registered of which 558 was fatalities. According to this survey, the Majority of the victims were herders and farmers.

Ethiopia therefore has employed its integrated and consolidated clearance capacities and so far has managed to clear a 58.3sqkms of land. Most of the grounds cleared are used for farming, grazing, and housing and infrastructure developments. Thus, the clearance has contributed to an increased food security and agricultural development as well as to the stabilization of peace and security through rehabilitation and development. Over 2 million people have benefited directly from the clearance.

Through our MRE and CLs capacity, about 454 thousand people of mine affected communities have received awareness sessions. We believe the awareness creation has paid off through behavioral changes. The signs for the positive changes are that 456 APs, 153 ATs and about 56, 000 UXOs found around the mine affected communities were reported and handed over to our experts by the community members.

The technical survey capacity also has contributed in down sizing of the numbers of the minefields and their respective areas which were surveyed during nation wide socio- economic impact survey. Of all the 1,916 suspected hazardous areas surveyed in the socio-economic impact survey, only 182 were confirmed minefields. The sizes of these confirmed minefields are about 37 sq kms. Other 363 suspected hazardous areas remained unvisited by our tech surveys.

26sqkms of the 37 sqkms of the identified mined land were cleared by our integrated mine clearance teams and the remaining 11sqkms are yet to be cleared in the coming years.

In General we have left with 11sqkms of land from the identified 16 minefields areas plus about 6 sqkms expected from the result of our tech surveys after visiting the 363 suspected hazardous fields. Therefore the total sum of the size of the identified minefields that required clearance in the future for Ethiopia to be free of landmines is 17 sqkms. What this means is, if things goes as planned, Ethiopia will celebrate its victory against land mines before the deadline.

While we are looking forward to end the landmine problems, it is also wise to analyze other possible similar threats and think about the future utilization of the existing capacity.

Given our geographic location we are planning to keep ERW disposal teams, trainers in all capacities as well as the management capability we acquire for years. This is because military movements in our region are imminent and ERWs can be the future threats. Also, most of our neighbors have not ended their landmine problems and therefore we are planning to provide a support.

Consequently, we are developing a training center to sustain our capacity and transfer our experience to those who need it. For instance, while we are dealing with our own problems, we are giving training to our neighbor friends from Sudan in handling mine detection dogs.

On a similar note, agreement is underway to build a security capacity with explosive detection dogs for UNECA in Addis Ababa. Talks are also ongoing with African Union to use the center for the training of African union peace keeping forces in mine action related businesses.

MR. President

I would like to conclude my updates by providing our budget demand for a successful compliance to the Ottawa treaty.

10 million USD is needed from our esteemed donors to become one of the major mine affected country that complied with its article 5 obligation with out requesting extension and even before its deadline.

Other 6 million USD is required for its strategy in the exit plan and sustained capacity development. With our exit plan, we will remain capable to tackle our possible future problems and help other mine affected ones. After that, with the current progress we are making in our overall development, we hope to be self sufficient and give a break to our kind donors.

I thank you