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FINAL

REPUBLIC OF **MOZAMBIQUE**

**11th MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**

General Exchange of Views

**Statement by H.E. Henrique Banze
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Phnom Penh, 28 November 2011

Mr. President,

His Royal Highness,

Dear Participants,

On behalf of the government of Mozambique, I would like to join previous speakers in commending you and your Government for having accepted to host the current Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. I would like to thank the President of the 10th MSP, Ambassador Gazmend Turdiu, for the commendable leadership during his tenure. I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the People of Cambodia for the warm hospitality accorded to us.

Mr. President,

As the government of Mozambique enters the half-way mark in its 5 year extension under Article 5, the successful completion of our mine action program remains a crucial priority in our efforts aimed at bringing about sustainable development in Mozambique. As the UNDP Administrator, Mrs Helen Clark mentioned yesterday, we have demonstrated our commitment by mainstreaming our mine action program into the core national plans of the Government, as a cross-cutting issue, thus, allowing domestic funding to be allocated to mine clearance programs through the State's Annual Budget.

Furthermore, it allowed the consolidation of the decentralization process of Mine Action to provincial and local level and brought about the improvement of the overall coordination through ownership of mine action at the local community level.

The Government of Mozambique remains committed to implementing the 2008-2014 National Mine Action Plan in order to clear all known mined areas by the treaty deadline of 2014. In order to do so in the most cost effective and efficient manner, the National Mine Action Program has focused on two methods.

First, we are striving to increase the mechanical demining capacity of the operators in Mozambique with the assistance from our international partners. The additional mechanical assets are fully integrated into our existing manual and other means to form a comprehensive approach to mine action.

Second, the National Demining Institute, working in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, has worked for the incorporation of land release procedures into the national standards.

Under these two methods, we are making progress towards our goal. However, through surveys envisioned in our extension request, we have identified new areas equaling approximately 11 million square meters resulting in almost double the amount of mine suspected area to be surveyed and cleared before our deadline. This requires us to double our efforts in this 5 year period envisioned in the extension request as well.

While we aim for the highest level of efficiency in mine action, we remain committed to continue working as thorough as possible for the implementation of the Mine-Free District approach. By adopting the district-by-district approach to mine action, we are confident that it will allow us to address successfully all known mine suspected areas, hence, setting a positive perspective in our efforts to address the landmine humanitarian impact.

We have achieved much progress since 2008 by clearing more than 17 million square meters of mine suspected areas which has clearly provided socio-economic benefits to our citizens. The number of new landmine victims is decreasing each year and so far this year, we have recorded 9 new victims, including 3 women. As more areas are cleared, security is increased, the free movement of people and goods is increasing and the cleared land is utilized by local populations to benefit their livelihoods. However, we still face a challenge of clearing the remaining 8.7 million square meters contained in the 235 suspected mined areas that need to be addressed before the deadline.

Almost 35% of these remaining areas are along our common border with Zimbabwe. These areas endanger the citizens of both our countries, which requires us to work together to jointly address the problem. This year we have started work with our neighbors in Zimbabwe that we hope will lead to the simultaneous demining of our common border.

Mr. President,

On behalf of my Government, I wish to seize the opportunity to convey our sincere gratitude to all governments and international organizations that through generous support demonstrated their confidence on Mozambique's commitment, and contributed in making possible the results so far attained.

Our objectives are clear and we strongly believe that with the generous assistance from our international partners, we will succeed.

Despite our progress, we still face several challenges. First, it is necessary to improve the accuracy of our surveys to better define the remaining mine suspected areas. We can do this by learning from the experience of others and best practice in the field of mine action. Second, the challenges presented by the remaining task require additional support from our international partners which we are aware is complicated by the ongoing international financial crisis that is affecting us all. Third, we continue to strive for enhanced coordination of all partners involved in mine action in Mozambique, namely the government, humanitarian demining operators, donors and other international partners. Finally, we shall continue to work to better align international assistance with the established priorities of the government in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

We wish to appeal for the continuation of their support and we urge other countries to join in. We hold dearly all states that have supported us since the beginning. We believe, therefore that even if they had to discontinue their support in the past, they will reconsider it and continue with assistance particularly in these crucial moment of the implementation of the extension mandate.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reiterate my Government's commitment to do its utmost with a view to accomplish the clearance of all mined areas and comply with obligation within the deadline.

MUITO OBRIGADO!

Phnom Penh, 28 November 2011