

Press Release



Mozambique announces it is now free of all known landmines, 2015 first year in decades without landmine casualties

Geneva, 1 December 2015 — Mozambique has become the 29th State to declare that it has fulfilled its landmine clearance obligation under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention, which bans the use, stockpile, production and transfer of these weapons.

The announcement was made by Pedro Comissário, Ambassador of Mozambique to the UN in Geneva during the second day of the Convention's Fourteenth Meeting of the States Parties taking place until 4 December in Geneva.

"The greatest indicator of our success is not the number of square meters cleared or the number of landmines destroyed, but the incalculable improvement to the development of Mozambique and the removal of fear from our communities", said the Ambassador. "A great measure of success is that 2015 will mark the first year in decades, without any new landmine casualties."

"When the Convention was adopted, the clearance of all mined areas in Mozambique was a distant prospect, now Mozambique can give hope to other mine-affected countries that fulfillment of one the Convention's key obligations is possible," said Alberto Augusto, Director of the Mozambican Mine Action Centre who has been at the forefront of these efforts for over a decade.

While Mozambique celebrates having removed all known anti-personnel mines, these hidden weapons have taken a heavy toll on the country, one that will be felt over decades to come. "Landmines have claimed tens of thousands of victims and landmine survivors in our territory that will require assistance, care and rehabilitation, as well as social and economic reintegration in society on an equal basis with others, as mandated by the Convention."

In addition to having cleared all known anti-personnel mines, Mozambique also destroyed 37,818 stockpiled mines.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention entered into force on 1 March 1999, and held its First Meeting of the States Parties two months later in Maputo. In 2014, Mozambique welcomed back the Convention, hosting its Third Review Conference.

Thirty States Parties are still in the process of clearing mined areas, including 13 States in Africa.

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For all communication and/or press-related questions please email the Convention's Implementation Support Unit: isu@apminebanconvention.org.

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