



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. HENRIQUE ALBERTO BANZE
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND COOPERATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE
AT THE 8th MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO
THE OTTAWA CONVENTION**

Amman, 19 November 2007

His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al-Husseini
President of the Eighth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention to
Ban Landmines,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon your election to preside over this 8th Meeting of the States Parties. We are sure that under your wise leadership our Meeting will be crowned with success.

My delegation wishes to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Government of Jordan for hosting this Meeting in this magnificent historical city of Dead Sea. We thank our hosts for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to our delegation and for the important site visits which gave us an opportunity to familiarize ourselves with Jordan's efforts in mine clearance. We also witnessed the valuable results of mine action in freeing a world heritage site of landmines, the Baptism site.

This Eighth Meeting is a special one as it takes place two months after the 10th anniversary of the adoption and signing of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines. This is also the first time a Meeting of State Parties is held in a mine affected country in the Middle East. We should, therefore, reflect the reality of the challenge and, hopefully, rekindle interest in the Convention within the region.

The meeting allows us to evaluate the progress and efforts undertaken in the implementation of the Nairobi Plan of Action with specific emphasis on priority areas of work in the lead-up to the 2009 Second Review Conference for the first signatories of the Convention.

Your Royal Highness
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Having in mind the request issued by the Co-chairs, to strictly confine ourselves to new information, we would like to stress the following in relation to mine action developments in Mozambique:

- As previously announced, mine clearance operations in 4 Provinces, out of 10, have been concluded. A total of 888 sites/mines in an extension of 10 million square metres have been cleared in operations that started in 1993. A preliminary evaluation exercise of the affected community concluded that all known mined areas have been cleared. It is acknowledged that a UXO threat remains and there is a degree of concern in some communities about potential isolated mines. During the evaluation, communities have also reported the existence of ammunition caches which may include anti-personnel mines. We are working towards verifying this situation.
- Parallel to mine clearance operations, the 6 remaining provinces have been subjected to re-survey, which was concluded in October this year.
- Preliminary results of the above-mentioned Baseline Survey indicates a confirmed remaining mine problem of approximately 500 mined areas totalling just over 10 million square metres. In addition 69 UXO tasks, 33 roads representing almost 700km and 6 sites in need of battlefield area clearance were confirmed.
- Due to time and resource constraints the survey was not able to finalise the problem on the borders with some neighbouring countries. Also, a few extremely large suspected areas representing 9.9 million square metres are in need of further technical survey. Based on past experience these suspected areas are calculated to yield approximately 1.3 million square metres that will require clearance. Potentially further infrastructure tasks, mainly on power-lines and dams in remote areas, may require further survey.
- It is intended to undertake clearance of the known mined areas, UXO and road tasks concurrently with finalising the technical survey of suspect areas, infrastructure and borders.
- Based on these survey results, it is clear that Mozambique will not meet its obligation in the given 10 years under Article 5. Therefore we will submit an extension request to allow the completion of the remaining problem taking into consideration the availability of resources.

- A range of factors have impeded Mozambique's ability to meet the 10 year convention deadline. As in many countries the problem has been significant and challenging. The most salient reasons are that Mozambique is a vast country where the mine contamination has been widely distributed throughout the country with developing infrastructure that has been regularly setback by seasonal flooding and other natural disasters. In many ways the extent of the problem was not well known, with a clearer picture of the situation only being finalised very recently as a result of the Baseline Survey.
- From 2005, the number of large humanitarian operators undertaking clearance operations has reduced from five to two. The existing national capacity includes a number of small scale national operators with limited technical capacity and the Military Engineering branch of the Armed Forces. Clearly, Mozambique will continue to need the assistance of the international organisations to conduct large scale clearance in a timely manner.
- Government continues to develop the capacity of the Armed Forces to support current clearance efforts and may consider giving them the responsibility for residual issues post convention compliance.
- The release of the Strategic Plan for Mine Action (2008-onwards) was postponed pending the completion of the Baseline Survey efforts. The plan is being finalised in concert with the extension request and is due for release in early 2008.
- Despite resource limitations, the government of Mozambique remains committed to mine action and, as a result, it is increasing national contributions. This year, the government has allocated approximately 1.9 million USD, a 37% increase from last year. The government's contribution for 2008 is forecast at 3 million USD.
- In terms of external assistance, Mozambique's priority remains with financial support to large scale clearance, mine victims assistance programmes, information management and quality control. State funding of approximately 3 million USD will contribute to clearance

operations, management of the mine action institute, supporting the procurement of equipment by the operators.

As you can see, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mozambique's challenge today is of a lesser magnitude than it was eight years ago. We do believe that the goal of a Mozambique free from landmines is attainable within a relatively short period, less than a decade. However, the progress made thus far will only have the desired impact if we are able to complete the remaining tasks. This can only be achieved with continued commitment of all.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let us make the Dead Sea Meeting the solid foundation upon which we shall consolidate the remarkable achievements so far attained thus ensuring the total elimination of anti-personnel landmines and reducing human suffering. To this end, we call on all States Parties, non-parties, international organizations and civil society to redouble efforts and generate the necessary political will to act and mobilize resources to alleviate human crisis caused by these insidious weapons.

I thank you Mr. President.