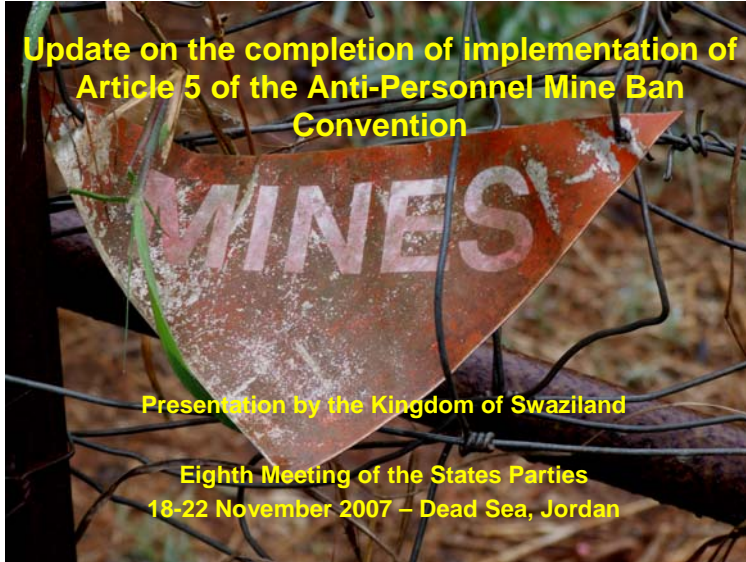


Update on the completion of implementation of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention



Presentation by the Kingdom of Swaziland

Eighth Meeting of the States Parties  
18-22 November 2007 – Dead Sea, Jordan

## Background

- During the conflict in Mozambique in the 1980s, an unknown number of AP mines were emplaced within Swaziland.
- Purportedly PMD 6 (wooden box) type mines were emplaced along the border, possibly up to a distance of 4.5 km, east of the crossing point at Namaacha, near Lomahasha.
- In 2000, Swaziland reported this as an area considered to be dangerous due to the suspected presence of mines.
- Information obtained more recently from government archives documented mine clearance activities undertaken in 1988.
- In 1988, joint efforts were undertaken by the Mozambican Army, and Swaziland's armed forces and police. 66 PMD 6 type mines, 1 mortar round and 1 POMZ type mine were removed. It is believed that all known mines were removed at the time.
- In 1999, the US military provided training assistance and warning signs were placed on existing fencing.



## Implementation support visit Oct. 2006

- October 2006: ISU personnel & GICHD operations director visit Swaziland & viewed the entire area considered to be dangerous.
- Based on evidence presented a general observation was made that the area is most likely not dangerous.



## Basis for support visit's conclusion

- There are no signs of landmines evident (e.g. craters, dead animals, mine fragments, etc.); There are no recorded casualties.
- Walking paths cross through the area in at least 10 places. In another, fence is damaged and cars likely had been driven through area.
- The Ministry of Agriculture has constructed occupied dwellings in two locations. A large area has been ploughed (to a depth of at least 30 cm) and maize crops are grown.
- Locations have been burned, but there were no signs or reports of mines having exploded.
- On the Mozambican side, houses have been constructed backing on to the border fence.
- The second half of the area features rocky terrain: It would not be possible to lay mines or there would be no point.
- Mozambican experts consulted indicated that all PMD 6 type mines discovered in the past 10 years have been decayed & could not function.



## Support visit's recommendations

- Swaziland should carry out a physical verification check in order to ensure that the area that is considered dangerous due to the suspected presence of mines indeed can now be said it is safe.
- A sample check could be undertaken by using standard manual demining / survey techniques to run a lanes across the area.
- If specific areas are excluded 20-30 lanes would be sufficient.
- Verification should be done according to accepted standards, and work monitored.
- The activity should be documented. If no mines are found, records could be used for transparency reporting of completion.
- If any mines are found, they should be marked and then the situation re-assessed to see if a full clearance operation is necessary.



## IMATC visit – Nov/Dec 2006

- November 29, 2006: IMATC instructor surveys area with USDF: Confirms findings of October implementation support visit.
- IMATC conducts 10 day refresher training for USDF personnel.
- December 4, 2006: USDF personnel deploy to begin process of clearing 20 lanes.
- Independent observers were invited to witness Swaziland's efforts.
- As of April 2007, Swaziland had marked and established 6 working lanes and 3 lanes had been demined; No mines had been found.
- Vegetation is very dense in places, naturally slowing the manual demining progress.
- While in ideal circumstances it may be possible to do what is required in weeks, a more realistic time period from start to end would be six months.



## Towards completion Apr-Aug 2007

- Wild fire swept through area. No explosions reported.
- Wild fire eliminates vegetation, permits increased pace of work.
- By end of August 2007, 30 lanes completed. Some metal found, but not mines.
- A record of 30 lanes annexed to Swaziland's declaration of completion.



Metal waste found during verification

## Completion!



- Kingdom of Swaziland declares that on 31 August 2007 it had fulfilled its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.
- We have determined that there are no longer areas under the jurisdiction or control of the Kingdom of Swaziland in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced.

## Completion!



- It should be possible for Swaziland to have fulfilled its Article 5 obligations well prior to the 7MSP.
- Article 5 implementation has been a case study of cooperation – internally with all relevant ministries involved and internationally with support provided by ISU/GICHD and IMATC.
- The involvement of high level officials has helped move the implementation process forward.
- While Swaziland's implementation challenge is small compared to others, it still requires the State to be fully engaged in order to fulfil its obligations.