

**PRESENTATION ON ZIMBABWE'S REQUEST FOR EXTENSION FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF ARTICLE 5 OF THE
CONVERSION TO THE 9MSP ON 26 NOVEMBER 2008**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Zimbabwe still has 813.3 km² of land contaminated with anti-personnel mines. The clearing efforts that started soon after independence in 1980 have seen 306.6 km² being cleared from an initial contaminated area of 1 119.9 km², recovering 33 032 AP mines in the process. Zimbabwe is doing everything possible within its capacity and without any meaningful international support to rid itself of anti-personnel mines in compliance with the Convention and to facilitate national development.

The anti-personnel mines in the country were laid during the war of liberation, which lasted up to 1980, when Zimbabwe gained independence from the British. At independence, the new government of Zimbabwe inherited numerous mined areas within the country and six well-marked minefields along its borders with Zambia on the North and Mozambique on the East and South East. The minefields covering a total area of 1071.4 square kilometres were estimated to contain a total of 2 605 400 AP mines of the following types: Ploughshear, VS 50, R2M2, Carrot, R1M1 and M972. Apart from the marked minefields, other smaller minefields were discovered either during clearance of the marked minefield or when reported by the locals.

With assistance from the United States of America, Zimbabwe cleared the Victoria Falls to Mlibizi minefield, which was 286 km² in length. However, the support dried up or was abruptly stopped after one and half years of operations, leaving the Zimbabwean government to complete the clearance on its own - an operation that lasted a total of seven years. The EU also funded, during the same period, the clearance of Musengezi-Rwenya minefield by commercial deminers. Again, when funding abruptly dried up, the deminers left, leaving the job uncompleted. No quality assurance was done, and, as a result, the area cannot be considered safe.

The mines have caused untold suffering to the communities living in affected areas. Individuals are unable to carry out economic activities such as farming, and in some cases their livestock detonate mines. Since 1980, 1 550 people were reported killed or maimed and 120 000 livestock killed. The areas where the minefields were laid are remote, therefore, some casualties likely go unreported. The communities are denied a total of 45 700 ha of productive land. Tourism has also been affected, especially by the Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield, where a tripartite (South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) game park was established. The operation of this park is affected by the presence of mines on the Zimbabwean side.

Zimbabwe established a National Mine Action Authority (NAMAZ) through an Act of Parliament, the Anti-Personnel Mines (Prohibition) Act Chapter 11:19 of 2000, which is responsible for the general policy direction of mine action activities in the country. The Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC) is responsible for planning and coordinating all mine action activities in the country. Currently, demining activities are undertaken by military engineers. A squadron of six officers and 132 men (with 10 support staff) are currently deployed on humanitarian demining. Extensive mine risk education is carried out in the affected areas. A total of 25 000 people have been reached on annual basis since 2004. These people include community leaders but most of them were woman and youth. This greatly reduced mine casualties to nil from 2007.

In carrying out demining operations, both mechanical and manual means have been applied. Safe lanes are opened first by driving a bulldozer across the minefield with its blade raised, thereby detonating some mines. This process is repeated at least three times. A survey team then moves in with mine detectors carrying out manual clearance of the safe lanes. The safe lanes opened are then used as the baseline for the subsequent manual demining operation.

Due to limited resources, Zimbabwe relies on the old surveys conducted in 1994. However, technical surveys are conducted on every area being demined. This way, Zimbabwe does not run a risk of spending time, effort and resources clearing an uncontaminated area. Zimbabwe recognises that it should carryout fresh surveys in all minefields to determine the correct and more accurate extent of the remaining contaminated area.

Zimbabwe would have made far much more progress on its obligation to clear the country of landmines if more resources had been made available. What has been achieved so far has largely been due to Zimbabwe's own efforts. If Zimbabwe continues at the current funding level of about US \$10,000 per year, it could take us more than 30 years to complete the implementation of Article 5. In addition to a lack of international support, Zimbabwe has been impeded in fulfilling its obligations in a ten year period due to its isolation from the international mine action community. This isolation has resulted in Zimbabwe lagging behind in adopting up to date survey and demining techniques.

As a way forward we feel it will be appropriate if we resurvey all the remaining minefields while at the same time continue with demining of Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield where we are engaged at the moment. This will allow us to come up with a more accurate extent of our mine problem and thereby estimate more accurately the resources, time and effort that will be required to clear. Zimbabwe is therefore requesting an initial 22 months extension of its deadline that is from April 2009 to January 2011. By requesting a extension of the deadline until 31 January 2011, Zimbabwe intends to seek and receive international technical assistance in order to acquire up to date survey and demining techniques, to survey areas where the exact locations of mined areas

are unknown, to develop a plan that takes into account advanced techniques and then to submit a subsequent request for a period of time to implement the plan. This subsequent extension request will include a time schedule and budget for implementing Article 5, including a projection of funds that may be required from the international community. We estimate that we will require USD6 million to retrain our surveyors, re – survey the contaminated areas using latest techniques and with support from the mine action community and to continue with the current demining efforts.

STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGY: Zimbabwe's Strategy is to embark on combined commercial and humanitarian military demining as a long term strategy once a resurvey is completed. As a way forward we feel it will be appropriate if we resurvey all the remaining minefields while at the same time continue with demining of Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield where we are engaged at the moment. This will allow us to come up with a more accurate extend of our mine problem and thereby estimate the resources, time and effort that will be required to clear. Zimbabwe is therefore requesting an initial 22 month extension of its deadline. By requesting a extension of the deadline until 1 January 2011, Zimbabwe intends to seek and receive international technical assistance in order to acquire up to date survey and demining techniques, to survey areas where the exact locations of mined areas are unknown, to develop a plan that takes into account advanced techniques and then to submit a subsequent request for a period of time to implement the plan. This subsequent extension request will include a time schedule and budget for implementing Article 5, including a projection of funds that may be required from the international community.

EXECUTION PLAN (SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM PLAN ONLY)

Survey Thirty surveyors will be trained and divided into two teams of twenty (team A) and ten (team B) surveyors. Team A will carry out resurvey of known minefields while team B will focus on new contaminated areas.

Survey Team A

Conduct level 2 of already known minefields.

These minefields were last surveyed in 1994 using the then available survey technology. If latest technology and survey techniques are used, it might be possible to release some areas without clearance. The resurvey will start on the second quarter of 2009 to allow for training and preparations. We hope we would received international support in the form of funding and training of the surveyors.

Survey Team B.

Team B will focus on newly discovered and unsurveyd minefields. For now the known minefields which are still to be surveyed are Lusulu and Mukumbura (these are small minefields around and/or near the already surveyed minefield). As we do not know whether other minefields will be discovered, the team will remain active for the two years from 2009.

DEMINING Demining will continue to be conducted by the military; however another squadron will be trained to boost the capacity of those currently deployed. Focus will remain Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner Minefield. It is our hope that the additional staff will be trained on the latest clearance techniques and we would be supported by the international community to acquire mine clearance equipment. Once the resurvey is complete, we will draw up another plan for clearance of the confirmed minefields.

HUMANITARIAN MILITARY DEMINING BUDGET AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Ser	Objective	Activities	Budget Description		Remarks
			Key Requirement	Cost (USD)	
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	1. To resurvey known uncleared mined areas by 2010.	1.1 Training of surveyors to boost the current strength.	Survey equipment and accessories.	23 000	To deploy (1.2) suitably transport should be acquired.
		1.2 Deployment to known uncleared minefields	Transport and other logistics support.	2 000 000	
		1.3 Resurvey known uncleared minefields	Administration and variable cost	5 000	
		1.4 Data collation and analysis and submission of report	Total requirement to resurvey uncleared mined areas	2 028000	
	2. Conduct survey on newly discovered minefields by year 2010	2.1 Mobilization of trainees.	Survey equipment and accessories.	23 000	
		2.2 Training of surveyors.	Transport and other logistics	1 500 000	

		1.3 Deployment.	support.		
		1.4 Survey of newly discovered minefields	Administration and variable cost	5 000	
		1.5 Data collation and analysis and submission of reports	Total requirement to resurvey uncleared mined areas	1 528 000	
Sub Total				3 556 000	
3	3.Complete clearance Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner by 2011	3.1 Conduct Technical resurvey of minefields	Detection equipment and accessories	1 000 000	To boost current strength
		3.2 Training of additional deminer	Transport and logistical support.	2 000 000	
		3.3 Deployment additional strength.	Administration and variable	25 000	
		3.4 Continue clearance and land release.	Medical	5 000	
			Total required to clear Sango border Post to Crooks Corner	3 030 000	
4	Total requirement up to 2011			6 856 000	

CONCLUSION

We want to ascertain the extent of the contaminated area by taking advantage of the latest survey equipment and techniques as a country that has been isolated from the international mine action community. It is our hope that we have all come to the realisation that humanitarian activities should not be mixed with politics because no matter how we regard the political leadership of a particular country, the people of that country will remain part of the human race who require our assistance, in time of need. Failure to assist at any particular time means with time history will judge the conversion in this case harshly.

Our efforts to rid the country of land mines are primarily for facilitating national development and in the process fulfilling the state's obligations to fulfil Article 5 of the convention. The minimum cleared area this year of just more than 2 000 square kilometres was caused by a number of factors beyond our control, one of which is the economic meltdown.

The prices in my country are now about ten times more expensive than the average world prices. This is one of our biggest problems at the moment and naturally has a bearing on our budget. However assistance can be rendered through the provision of the required equipment directly. Which ever way we look at it, we will require international assistance in training so assistance can be provided by contracting an organisation to train our surveyors and provide funding for the actual operation, which will reduce the whole budget.