



The Republic of Malawi

**DECLARATION OF COMPLETION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 OF
THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING,
PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON
THEIR DESTRUCTION**

Ninth Meeting of the States Parties
Geneva, 24– 28 November 2008

**Declaration of Completion of Implementation of Article 5 of the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-
Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

***Submitted by the Republic of Malawi at the Ninth Meeting of the States
Parties
Geneva, 24– 28 November 2008***

Introduction

1. On 4 December 1998, the Republic of Malawi signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, 18 September 1997 (hereinafter 'the Convention') and ratified the Convention on 13 August 1998.
2. As required under Article 7 of the Convention, in 2005, the Republic of Malawi submitted an initial Transparency Report indicating that there were certain areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines were suspected to be emplaced.
 - 2.1. In doing so, the Republic of Malawi acknowledged that it had an obligation under Article 5 of the Convention to determine if there were indeed anti-personnel mines emplaced

Transparency Report

3. In the 2005 Transparency Report the Republic of Malawi indicated that it suspected areas that could contain mines along the border with Mozambique.
 - 3.1. The Republic of Malawi was suspected of being contaminated by mines and other explosive remnants of war as a result of the spill-over from the internal armed conflict in the neighbouring Mozambican.
4. The Republic of Malawi also indicated that 33 (thirty-three) bases that belonged to the now disbanded Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP) and old (abandoned) refugee camps were affected by anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance.
 - 4.1. A variety of devices were indicated as possible in these areas, and stating that the quantity had not been confirmed.
5. As the Republic of Malawi lately has suffered from the effects of flooding on a regular basis, it was also suspected that possible landmines could have moved during the floods creating additional mine contaminated areas.

6. In order to verify the status of these areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines and to determine whether there were anti-personnel mines emplaced in, the Republic of Malawi requested for support to conduct a national landmine and unexploded ordnance survey for the purposes of verification and clearance of the afore-mentioned suspected areas.

7. Within the framework of the Completion Initiative and with subsequent financial and technical support from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian People's Aid conducted a national landmine and unexploded ordnance survey in the Republic of Malawi between 17 May and 15 December 2007.

Survey methodology and findings

9. Through interviews with representatives of the government, district authorities and traditional leaders, the Norwegian People's Aid identified 205 localities, mostly the southern part of Malawi, that were suspected to be hazardous areas, and thus required further investigation.

10. Through general mine survey and close dialogue with representatives of local communities, local authorities and district authorities, 199 out of the 205 targeted locations were officially cancelled for further mine action as no suspected hazardous areas were known to exist in and around the identified localities.

11. However, the Norwegian People's Aid identified six (6) suspected hazardous areas.

11.1. In accordance with international mine action standards, the Norwegian People's Aid cancelled three (3) suspected hazardous areas after the initial technical assessment and one (1) suspected hazardous area was reduced.

11.2. After further technical assessment, all four (4) of these areas were released in close dialogue with local communities.

12. With reference to the remaining two areas contained in the southern region districts of Mwanza and Chikwawa in the Republic of Malawi, the Norwegian People's Aid conducted full mine clearance in one suspected hazardous area without finding landmines or other explosive remnants of war.

13. As such, battle area clearance was carried out in the only one (1) remaining suspected area and revealed a small number of unexploded ordnance that subsequently were destroyed.

13.1. Both locations have, in close dialogue with representatives of the communities and their local authorities, been officially handed over to the

local communities as free of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

14. The Republic of Malawi has determined that there are no longer areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced. In other words, the Republic of Malawi is now a mine-free country.

14.1. This fact is supported by the extensive information and evidence collected by the Norwegian People's Aid, which attests that, to the best of their knowledge, the mine problem in Malawi is now resolved

15. In consultation with partners and based on these findings, the Government of Malawi has determined that it is in compliance with its Article 5 obligations.

15.1. On this footing, therefore, the Republic of Malawi formally declares its compliance with obligations under Article 5 of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention to the Ninth Meeting of the State Parties to the Convention.

15.2. In the unlikely event that previously unknown mined areas are discovered after this date, the Republic of Malawi will:

(i) report such mined areas in accordance with its obligations under Article 7 and share such information through any other informal means such as the Intersessional Work Programme;

(ii) ensure the effective exclusion of civilians in accordance with Article 5 and;

(iii) destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in these mined areas as a matter of urgent priority, making its need for assistance known to other States Parties, as appropriate.

Conclusion

16. On the basis of the foregoing facts, the Republic of Malawi would like to formally declare that it has fulfilled its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention by having determined that there are no longer areas under its jurisdiction or control which are dangerous due to the presence or suspected presence of anti-personnel mines.

16.1. The Republic of Malawi OF Malawi is grateful for the financial and technical support from UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Norwegian People's Aid.