



**Statement by the Republic of Malawi on the 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 their
Destruction**

**At the Ninth Meeting of State Parties
Geneva, 24 – 28 November 200**

Mr President,

As you might recall, Malawi presented an informal report on the completion of implementation of Article 5 obligations at the Intersessional Standing Committee on Mine Clearance in June 2008. Today, Mr President, I have the honour to present a formal declaration of completion of implementation of Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention by Malawi.

Malawi has duly complied with Article 5 obligations; and Malawi is now a land mine free country. The Republic of Malawi signed the Ottawa Convention on 4 December 1998, and ratified the Convention on 13 August 1998. As required under Article 7 of the Convention, Malawi submitted an initial Transparency Report in 2005 indicating that there were certain areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines were suspected to be emplaced. In doing so, Malawi acknowledged that it had an obligation under Article 5 of the Convention regarding verification and clearance of the suspected mined areas.

In the 2005 Transparency Report the Republic of Malawi indicated that it suspected areas that could contain mines along the border with Mozambique. We 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. The Government of Malawi requested for support to conduct a national landmine and unexploded ordnance survey in this regard.

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

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. However, the Norwegian People's Aid identified six (6) suspected hazardous areas. In accordance with international mine action standards, the Norwegian People's Aid cancelled three (3) suspected areas after the initial technical assessment and one (1) suspected area was reduced. After further technical assessment, all four (4) of these areas were released in close dialogue with local communities.

With reference to the remaining two areas contained in the southern region districts of Mwanza and Chikwawa in Malawi, the Norwegian People's Aid conducted full mine clearance in one suspected hazardous area without finding landmines or other explosive remnants of war. 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. Both locations have been officially handed over to the local communities as free of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

Mr President,

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. 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. 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. On this footing, therefore, the Republic of Malawi formally declares its completion of implementation of Article 5 of the Convention. A comprehensive report of this Declaration is available as an official document of 9MSR.

In the unlikely event that previously unknown mined areas are discovered after this Declaration, Malawi will: (i) report such mined areas in accordance with its obligations under Article 7; (ii) ensure the effective exclusion of civilians in accordance with Article 5 and; (iii) destroy or ensure the destruction of all such mines, making its need for assistance known to other States Parties.

In closing, Mr President, Malawi is grateful for the financial and technical support from UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian People's Aid and the ISU. Malawi is ready and willing to share experiences with other State Parties towards our common goal of a mine free world.

Thank you, Mr President.