
**Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel
Mines and on Their Destruction**

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Article 5 extension requests and the extension request process

**Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
Article 5 of the Convention
Executive summary**

Submitted by Zimbabwe

1. At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited six distinct major mined areas that had been laid by the Rhodesian Army along its borders with Zambia and Mozambique. The original contamination covered a total of 511.05 square kilometres. It is estimated that these areas contained over 2,605,400 anti-personnel mines and that there were and are three different types of minefields as follows:

(a) Cordon Sanitaire: The cordon sanitaire barrier generally consists of three rows of sub-surface anti-personnel mines laid in a standard pattern with a width of 25 metres. This type of minefield was laid close to or on the international border.

(b) Ploughshare Minefield: The ploughshare minefield consists essentially of three rows of ploughshare directional fragmentation mines mounted on 0.5 to 1 metre high stakes protected by sub-surface anti-personnel mines with a depth of 400 metres.

(c) Reinforced Ploughshare Minefield: The reinforced ploughshare minefield is essentially 6 rows of ploughshare directional fragmentation mines mounted on 0.5 to 1 metre high stakes protected by sub-surface anti-personnel mines with a depth of 400 metres.

2. These mined areas have had a severe socio-economic impact on Zimbabwean rural communities. They have severely affected the rural economy as very large numbers of livestock have been and continue to be killed by mines. Mines also continue to injure or in extreme cases kill humans, due to lack of suitable health care facilities in affected remote areas. Zimbabwe has not been able to build or maintain a reliable database of casualties caused by landmines. What is clear, however, is that the population that is most at risk from landmines includes poor rural subsistence farmers, who are often forced through economic necessities to take risks. While the number of casualties reported is relatively low, the real numbers are likely to be much higher. New reports have surfaced in the last months and it is expected that as organizations deploy to the field a more accurate picture of the number of people injured and killed by mines will become available. The greatest impact on the

population has proven to be on the Musengezi to Rwenya nad the Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield.

3. Unfortunately, perimeter fences that ensured effective exclusion of civilians from mined areas have since been damaged by animals and removed by locals for domestic use. Owing to prohibitive costs and lack of sustainable measures to secure the perimeter fence from theft, no replacement has been placed but danger warning signs have been put in place.

4. In order to respond to the contamination of mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), in 2000 the Government of Zimbabwe established the National Mine Action Authority of Zimbabwe (NAMAAZ) to regulate all mine action activities in Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC) to plan and coordinate mine action activities.

5. Clearance of the minefields started soon after independence, with priority being given to clearing small gaps in order to facilitate infrastructure development, resettlement and economic development. Major clearance started in 1998, with the United States of America providing initial financial, material and training assistance to the Zimbabwe National Army to clear the Victoria Falls to Mlibizi minefield. This support was discontinued after one and half years leaving Zimbabwe to complete the bulk of the clearance of the 286 square kilometres minefield on its own in 2005. Further financial assistance was provided by the European Union between 1999 and 2000 to demine the 145.28 square kilometres Musengezi to Rwenya minefield. This support was withdrawn when only 6.2 square kilometres had been cleared. Since then, there has been no international financial assistance provided to Zimbabwe to clear its mined areas. Zimbabwe has been doing everything possible within its capacity to rid itself of anti-personnel mines in compliance with the Convention.

6. Zimbabwe's initial ten year deadline for fulfilling its mine clearance obligations under the Convention for the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction expired in March 2009. Zimbabwe requested an extension of 22 months in order to carry out survey work to acquire a more accurate representation of the dimensions of mined areas that need to be addressed and present a new extension request with a detailed work plan to clear these areas. This extension was granted in 2008 at the Ninth Meeting of the States Parties. As a basis in this initial request, Zimbabwe had inaccurately assumed that the minefields were 1.3 kilometre deep and, therefore arrived at an exaggerated total area to be addressed.

7. During the 22 months granted to Zimbabwe, ZIMAC, with support provided through the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit (ISU) undertook a more detailed analysis using core data from sources that included the 1994 MineTech Survey Report, a 2000 Koch – Mine Safe Completion Report, a 2010 HALO Trust Border Minefield Survey Report done for the Government of Mozambique and significant experience and knowledge gained by Zimbabwe's National Mine Clearance Squadron from more than 13 years of clearance.

8. This analysis revealed that contamination data available on the mined areas of Musengezi to Rwenya, Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner, Rusitu to Muzite Mission, Sheba Forest to Beacon Hill and Burma Valley can be assumed to be reasonably accurate, and thus it can be concluded with certainty that no detailed technical survey will be necessary (with the exception of the Cordon Sanitaire in the Crooks Corner – Sango Border Post minefield, which is not recorded, but is known to exist). What would be required though is to confirm the accuracy of available information on these mined areas through a limited general survey. The mined areas of Lusulu, Mukumbura, Kariba and Rushinga all require more detailed technical survey but the figures provided in this request are based on reasonable analysis of the data available.

9. Unfortunately, due to the lack of funds as well as other factors, apart from this analysis Zimbabwe was not able to accomplish the survey work it had intended to carry out during the initial extension period and was obliged to submit a second request for extension of a period of 24 months which was granted at the Tenth Meeting of the States Parties. The above results from the analysis of the core data formed the basis for this second extension request.

10. Over the course of the previous extension request Zimbabwe has continuously carried out clearance work in the mined area of Sango Borer Post to Crooks Corner. To date a total of 305.2 square kilometres of Zimbabwe mined area have been cleared with 209,256 anti-personnel mines have been destroyed and it has been established that a further 13.93 square kilometres can be removed from the list of suspected areas for other reasons. Zimbabwe still has 205.85 square kilometres of land contaminated with anti-personnel mines and UXOs continue to be recovered.

11. The remaining 205.85 square kilometres is composed of 7.92 square kilometres of cordon sanitaire minefields and 197.92 kilometres of ploughshare or reinforced ploughshare. The terrain in some of these areas is mountainous and rocky thus making access to the minefield and employment of some of the demining equipment very difficult. Some of the areas have been affected by soil erosion as there are gullies while others are swampy or prone to flooding. In addition, there are areas that are thickly wooded or with hard clay surface which is hard to work on. All these characteristics as well as extremely high temperatures in some of the mined areas have the potential to significantly affect demining operations and have to be considered in planning.

12. These land release activities have been carried out through full clearance. Following the total clearance of a particular minefield, a quality control/quality assurance team carries out inspection of the cleared area. Commercial deminers in the past have used a combination of mechanical clearance and standard manual demining techniques followed by an independent external quality assurance process. Military deminers use standard demining techniques, followed by an internal quality assurance process. Currently clearance of mined areas is being undertaken by military engineers with funding from the government. Subject to availability of funding, other players such as local commercial demining companies can also take part.

13. Unfortunately, although things have progressed, Zimbabwe has not been able to carry out its Article 5 commitments it set for itself in the past two requests for extension due to the following:

(a) Inadequate funding for demining from the government: The economy is depressed and constrained as a result of factors such as illegal economic sanctions. Zimbabwe is unable to access funds from multilateral institutions to revitalise the economy. The government has numerous pressing commitments to meet with the little resources available.

(b) Insufficient demining equipment: Due to inadequate equipment, the available military demining capacity cannot be fully utilised. Aged mine detectors and personal protective equipment (PPE) currently in use are endangering the lives of deminers. There is need to immediately re-equip to sustain operations.

14. In addition to clearance activities during the second extension request Zimbabwe signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) with the ICRC, the HALO TRUST, and Norwegian People's Aid. The main activities contained in the MOU concerns the support of the ICRC in terms of capacity building. During the month of March a technical expert of the ICRC visited Zimbabwe in order to begin the implementation of the Plan of Cooperation which seeks to explore possible areas of development of the demining and survey capacity of the National Mine Clearance Unit of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces

(ZDF), and to develop jointly with ZIMAC a strategy to address potential needs in terms of training and equipment in the field of survey and humanitarian demining.

15. Based on this support, during the period of 27-30 March 2012 the ICRC provided training in Demining Management to Senior Engineer Officers and during the period of 10-25 May 2012 provided junior officers with a train the trainer course on humanitarian demining and survey. Furthermore the ICRC facilitates the training of medics in the use of medical trauma kits and the ICRC has also procured equipment to support the equipping of a limited survey capacity and to improve the efficiency of Zimbabwe's demining capacity including personal protective equipment and Medical equipment.

16. During the extension period and through the signing of MOUs with the HALO Trust and NPA, Zimbabwe put forward efforts to accelerate survey and demining efforts by allocating specific areas for survey and clearance by these organizations as follows:

<i>Area</i>	<i>Organization</i>
1 Musengezi to Rwenya	HALO Trust
2 Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner	National Mine Clearance Unit
3 Rusitu to Muzite Mission	NPA
4 Sheba Forest to Beacon Hill	NPA
5 Burma Valley	NPA
6 Rushinga	HALO Trust
7 Lusulu	National Mine Clearance Unit
8 Mukumbura	HALO Trust
9 Kariba	National Mine Clearance Unit

17. At the time of writing NPA and the HALO Trust are currently establishing themselves and carrying out recruitment and training of personnel to begin survey operations in 2012 and clearance operations soon after. Unfortunately, the government has still not concluded its registration procedure of the HALO Trust due to internal complications but this registration should be forthcoming in the very near future.

18. It is the intention of the Zimbabwean government to maintain its support to the clearance of landmines in Zimbabwe through the continued deployment of the mine clearance squadron. Although the unit is currently struggling from the lack of sufficient equipment, we expect that external support will assist us with updating the unit's demining skills and assisting us with the provision of basic demining equipment such as detectors and PPE. Furthermore, an area which has been achieved, albeit not comprehensively, is the delivery of mine risk education (MRE) to vulnerable communities. During the extension period MRE will be carried out by all organizations as part of resurvey and clearance operations.

19. A lot of benefits will be realised in humanitarian, economic, social and environmental aspects in the endeavour to fulfil the work to be carried out during the requested period. This will allow for more land to be relieved of mines thereby creating more room for greater opportunities. Business opportunities in areas of agriculture, tourism, mining, game ranching and industrial sites would be realised over the period. On the social aspect, local inhabitants will freely access their water sources, have ample grazing land for their domestic animals and travel across lands to visit their relatives without risking their

lives and limbs. In such a situation, investors would be much more willing to make business in a mine free land.

20. In order to address the remaining challenge, Zimbabwe is requesting a third extension of 24 months until January 2015 in order for Zimbabwe and its partners to carry out the following main activities:

2012

(a) Initiation of resurvey and clearance by the National Mine Clearance Squadron on Segment 1 of Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield (Crooks Corner to Mwenezi River, 21 kilometre double stretch).

(b) Procurement of equipment and recruitment, training and deployment of personnel for survey, clearance and mine risk education by international organizations.

(c) Clearance of the Sango Border Post to Crooks corner minefield.

2013

(a) Completion of Segment 1 of Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield and initiation of Segment 2 of Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner minefield (Mwenzi River to Sango Border Post 32 kilometre double stretch).

(b) Completion of Zimbabwe National Mine Action Standards.

(c) Provide an update to States Parties of survey efforts during the meetings of the Standing Committee.

(d) Completion of survey by international organizations and training and deployment of mine clearance teams.

(e) Clearance from Musengezi to Rwenya, Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner and Rusitu to Muzite Mission minefield.

2014

(a) Continuation of mine clearance activities of the following minefields:

(i) Musengezi to Rwenya

(ii) Sango Border Post to Crooks Corner

(iii) Rusitu to Muzite Mission minefield.

(b) Submission of comprehensive clearance plan based on survey results by March 2014.

21. It is expected that activities over the course of the extension period will total \$11,155,425 with a total of \$800,000 to be provided by the Government of Zimbabwe and \$10,355,425 to be provided by the international community through partner organizations.