

Comments on Zimbabwe's Extension Request

Third Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty, 23 June 2014

Extension requested by Zimbabwe: Three-year interim period, until 1 March 2018

Key comments on the request:

- Zimbabwe's request is well presented. Progress will rely in part on the adoption of land release techniques, on an agreement with Mozambique on demining activities along their border, and on ensuring a conducive work environment for clearance operators.
- Financial requirements are presented but there is no information on the resource mobilization strategy or the funds already secured at the national level.

Expectations for the Review Conference and for the extension period:

The purpose of the new extension period is to complete the survey of all remaining areas and to clear about 4km² of contaminated land. Partial HALO Trust survey of what is by far the largest mined area, from Musengezi to Rwenya, suggests contamination may cover a considerably smaller area than previously estimated. **Recommendation:** *Zimbabwe should share any information on whether continued survey is indeed suggesting a far smaller mined area in the Musengezi to Rwenya minefield, and should make the new estimate of contamination public as soon as possible.*

In 2012, the Analyzing Group encouraged Zimbabwe to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques that could lead to obligations being fulfilled in a shorter time frame. **Recommendation:** *Zimbabwe should share information on how it followed-up on the Analyzing Group's remark. It should also ensure a functional quality management system is in place.*

Some activities still depend on the signature of an agreement with Mozambique on demining activities along their border, on which negotiations have started long ago. **Recommendation:** *The ICBL encourages Zimbabwe and Mozambique to conclude negotiations as a matter of urgent priority, since the lack of an agreement will also potentially impact Mozambique's ability to meet its own deadline.*

Additional recommendation: *The ICBL encourages Zimbabwe to ensure the administrative framework for clearance operators is supportive of efficient activities. This could enable a precious time gain.*

Zimbabwe projects that costs for the extension period will amount to about US\$13 million. In 2012 (last year for which data is available), Zimbabwe contributed \$800,000 in national funding, and received \$1.7 million in international assistance. It was the first time that Zimbabwe received international financial support for mine action since 1999. The request does not provide information on how funds will be raised, or on whether the government has already committed funds for the extension period. **Recommendation:** *Zimbabwe should clarify how financial resources will be mobilized to fulfill the plan, and how much of the estimated budget has already been secured.*