

ZIMBABWE

**STATEMENT BY THE ZIMBABWE DELEGATION TO THE THIRD  
REVIEW CONFERENCE TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN  
CONVENTION, MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE: DELIVERED BY MAJOR  
GENERAL N.M. DUBE, ZIMBABWE DEFENCE FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF  
JOINT OPERATIONS AND PLANS ON 27 JUNE 2014**

**His Excellency, Honourable Henrique BANZE, President of the Third Review  
Conference**

**Honourable Ministers here present**

**Your Excellencies**

**Distinguished Delegates**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

At the outset, the Zimbabwe delegation would like to express its deepest gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Mozambique, our brothers and sisters, for the resounding success in hosting this pre-eminent Third Review Conference to the Anti- Personnel Mine Ban Convention in this beautiful city of Maputo. Undoubtedly, the hosting of this landmark event has immeasurably raised the profile of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Africa region alike. Zimbabwe would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate and commend the Ambassador of Mozambique in Geneva, H.E. Pedro Commissario and his team for the tenacious efforts in steering the drafting of the main outcome documents to be adopted by this Conference this afternoon- the Maputo Action Plan, the Implementation Machinery and Meeting Programme and the Political Declaration.

**Mr President**

Zimbabwe has a lot to learn, in terms of experiences and best practices, from Mozambique in the area of demining and we hope that fellow States Parties faced with mine clearance challenges will take a leaf from you. The aggressive manner in

which Mozambique has engaged herself in the area of demining has obviously culminated into these positive and meaningful results. This is the prime reason why Mozambique will soon be declaring herself a mine free country, an important milestone considering the huge mine contamination situation that prevailed during the First Meeting of States Parties held here in Maputo in 1999.

Zimbabwe and Mozambique, being Southern African countries which share a common border still infested with mines, it is our fervent hope that this Third Review Conference will provide an opportunity for the international community to further understand the magnitude and detrimental impact of landmines in our region. Certainly, the members of the global community will leave Maputo reinvigorated to push mine action agenda forward with great determination and tenacity.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is built on principled solid international cooperation and solidarity aimed at putting an end to the severe humanitarian suffering caused by Anti-Personnel Landmines owing to their indiscriminate consequences. This week at this Third Review Conference, it is indeed time to celebrate the success as well as to take stock of the challenges confronting the Convention. The international community would chart the future roadmap for the Convention with the view to ensuring that we achieve our lofty goal of a mine free world. The outcome of this Conference will be a strong and ambitious renewal of the international community's commitment to comply and complete the challenge that began here in Maputo, Mozambique 15 years ago in 1999.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention has witnessed tremendous achievements and successes particularly with regards to its membership which now stands at 161 States Parties, the destruction of around 45 million anti-personnel landmines and in reducing the number of victims and making the rights of victims a reality. However, the same Convention is still confronted with a number of surmountable challenges which includes the lack of its universalisation, limited financial and material resources and compliance related deficits. Today, some of the most important producers and consumers of Anti-Personnel Mines remain outside the

Convention. Clearly, this has the net effect of undermining the Convention. In our continent, Africa, we are proud that the Convention is almost universal and the use of Anti-Personnel Landmines is now viewed as an unacceptable behaviour. Conspicuously, mine action programmes continue to face a dwindling of resources particularly for clearance and victim assistance. Compliance with the Convention's obligations has remained another major challenge to this international instrument. These are some of the issues that we States Parties need to decisively deal with in order to ensure that the Convention remains in good health.

**Mr. President**

It would be a remiss on the part of Zimbabwe if we do not acknowledge and express our sincere appreciation for the immense support that has been extended to our demining programmes by some international organizations which are present here. In particular, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Halo Trust (UK), the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for their generous support to our demining efforts. This support will definitely accelerate the pace of demining in the country thus ensuring that Zimbabwe is able to comply and fulfill its obligations under the Convention. This also includes ensuring that Zimbabwe complies with its three year extension request to carry out a comprehensive survey to garner a clear understanding of the mines contamination challenge in the country. We are grateful that the States Parties will be granting Zimbabwe the extension we sought this afternoon.

Zimbabwe still has over 400 km stretch of minefields, mostly along the border with Mozambique. These areas are domiciled by the rural and poor people. These rural people cannot move away from these areas that they consider to be of historical significance. It is therefore imperative that the demining of these contaminated areas is accelerated for the benefit of our rural people. Against this background, let me take this opportunity to appeal to the international partners to support mine action programmes in Zimbabwe. Without international support, cooperation and assistance, mine clearance programmes in our country will take a long period of time to

complete. The negative impact on these rural people will therefore remain and it has become a huge hindrance to their livelihoods and social well being.

**Mr President**

This Third Review Conference provides a timely opportunity for the international community to examine and take decisive actions towards addressing the enormous challenges confronting victims, their families and communities with the view to ensuring that they lead their lives just like normal human beings. It is against this background that Zimbabwe has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in September 2013. Victim assistance is an important pillar of this Convention and therefore more efforts need to be exerted to make the rights of victims a reality. In recent times, we have witnessed heightened interest and attention to the victim assistance pillar of the Convention. This is a positive development. However, Zimbabwe is still confronted with a major challenge to carry out a survey to gather accurate disaggregated data about landmines survivors.

**Mr President**

Let me conclude by mentioning that Zimbabwe, just like many other States Parties represented here, fully endorses all the three main outcome documents of the Third Review Conference namely the Maputo Action Plan, the Implementation Machinery and Meeting Programme and the Political Declaration. What is needed from now going forward is for us States Parties to make sure that there is full implementation of the action oriented commitments contained in these outcome documents during the next five years. It is only through the full implementation of these commitments that the international community's dream of a mine free world can become a reality.

Zimbabwe, once again expresses its gratitude to the Government of Mozambique for the deep commitment and effort that you have deployed into planning process and in successfully hosting this landmark Third Review Conference to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in our region.

I thank you Mr President, Muinto Obrigado!