

Mozambican Government and Cooperation Partners Meet to Discuss National Action Plan Against Mines

Maputo, 23 June 2008 - The Mozambican Government and its cooperation partners met at Joaquim Chissano Conference Center today to discuss the National Mine Action Plan 2008-2012.

The National Mine Action Plan 2008-2012 targets that by 2012 all identified suspected areas will be cleared, including explosive devices are removed and destroyed. The community mine risk education programme will be carried out in a more sustainable manner, as well as providing assistance to the victims and their families to ensure social and economic reintegration.

This plan emerges as a response to the need to define the current problem of the presence of land mines and other explosive devices in Mozambique, whose objective is to ensure the eradication of the scourge of mines and other explosive devices. This enables a free movement of people and goods for the country's socioeconomic development, in line with the Mozambique's commitment to the Mine's Ban Treaty.

The document comprises of three main components, the first part assessing the current situation and an evaluation of the outgoing National Action Plan Against Mines 2002-2006, where it highlights the main operations, achievements, the lessons learned and the remaining problem of mines and other explosive devices in the country.

The second part of the document presents strategic guidelines and articulates the vision of the demining program in Mozambique, indicating the objectives to be pursued, the targets to be met, the tasks to be completed by 2012. Finally, the plan presents a strategic implementation and provides a description of the main activities to be carried out in order to achieve its objectives.

The meeting was chaired by the Mozambican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Oldemiro Baloi. Mrs. Naomi Kitahara also addressed the statement, representing the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Mr. Oldemiro Baloi noted that it was a privilege to discuss with cooperation partners the problem of land mines that is still hitting the country, causing deaths of people and hindering the

socioeconomic development of the populations. He added that he expected the meeting to be a good opportunity for a joint reflection on the progresses of the program achieved so far in terms of the future challenges.

He also noted the achievements in 2007, a year that marked the end of the implementation of the previous five-year plan 2002-2006, in which over 2 millions square meters of suspected land were cleared, having been identified and destroyed 865 land mines of different types and 1.249 other explosive devices. Other positive results distinguished by Minister Baloi were the civic education of the populations living in areas affected by mines benefited over 94,000 people and assistance to the victims by mines and UXO.

Mrs. Naomi Kitahara, pointed out that according to the survey conducted in 2007, the four northern provinces are about to be declared free of mines, while the southern and central provinces are still suspected and require additional efforts over the next few years. She added that Mozambique is described as a case of success in the areas of demining, and as such, Mozambique deserves further support by the international community.

UNDP has been a permanent partner of the Mozambican Government in the action against mines and this support is within the framework of the UNDP's strategic documents through BCPR at the global level, and through the Action Plan for Mozambique (CPAP) at the local level.

UNDP is committed to supporting the Mozambican Government in resource mobilization in order to speed up its actions, from strengthening its, coordination, information management system and technical assistance.

This meeting will be followed by a partner meeting to be organized shortly, to discuss more concrete and practical steps to implement the new Action Plan.

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