STATEMENT OF CAMBODIA ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION
INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 8-9 JUNE, 2017

Thank you Mr. Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi.

First of all, please allow me to congratulate your good leadership in capacity as the President of the 16th Meeting of the States Parties.

Mr. Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi, President of the 16th Meeting of the States Parties
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Landmines and ERW have claimed thousands of human casualties, caused unprecedented suffering, and hindered development. Since 1979 mines/ERW have caused an unacceptable number of casualties, based on Cambodia Mine/ERW Victim Information System report 64,688 casualties from 1979 to 2017 were recorded. After 25 years of demining, 1,591 km^2 of contaminated land has been released for productive use and 1,039,806 Anti-Personnel Mines, 24,457 Anti-Tank Mines and 2,677,397 ERWs were found and destroyed. The number of mine/ERW casualties has been brought down from 4,320 per year in 1996 to 83 a year in 2016. In 2017 from January to April, 26 casualties have been reported. Although there has been a substantial reduction in casualties; the current casualty number is still too high, and physical, psychological and socio-economic negative impacts are unacceptable.

Although, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and development partners acknowledge the significant progress has been achieved in tackling mines/ERW problem, the present of mines/ERW threat is still the main obstacle for development. According to the most recent comprehensive baseline survey report, approximately 1,970 km^2 of land is still suspected of contamination.

After the inception of Cambodia into ASEAN Free Trade Area, agricultural production, infrastructure construction, economic development and tourism

sector are expected to be growing at an increasing rate, requiring greater demining effort to provide more safe land in a very short time. Cambodian economy is one of the fastest growing economies in the region with the growth rate roughly 7% as the result of increasing foreign direct investment from China through One Belt One Road initiative, growing agricultural sector and increasing number of tourist. It is currently estimated around 5 million tourists per year come to visit Cambodia. Furthermore, to facilitate inter-regional trade, many special economic zones were established within the proximity of Cambodian border with our neighboring countries which lead to growing population and expansion of the community along the borders.

Mr. Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The most landmine contaminated areas are identified to be along the Thai-Cambodian border. Growing population and increasing development activities in the area will lead to higher risk of mines/ERW accidence. Therefore the Royal Government of Cambodia and Thai Government have established official mechanism through dialogue and cooperation with well-defined objectives to remove landmines and build an economic community along the border. Through serious technical discussion, the two governments decided to select only national operator from both side that could conduct operation to release contaminated land along the border.

Cambodia's extension request to eliminate APM contamination by 2019 is out of reach. Changes affecting the mine action sector are multi-dimensional domestically and globally. Their dynamic nature will impact mine action operations as well as the sector performance going forward. In 2016, an independent review of the Mine Action Sector in Cambodia recommended that the Cambodia mine action sector fine-tune and develop a new and well informed strategic plan to guide the future directions for Cambodia's humanitarian mine action program.

In this regard, the NMAS 2018-2025 is developed in consultation with all mine action stakeholders and under the leadership of the CMAA with a view to enhance program alignment to National Strategic Development Plan and harmonize and align development partners' support to the sector. This NMAS is developed based on lessons learnt and past experience through the implementation of previous strategies, related sector strategies, and numerous stakeholder consultations. It outlines how Cambodia will address its Mine/ERW problems, specifically to destroy APM by 2025. The

strategy also addresses the preparation for Mine/ERW residual threats after 2025 as well.

Another important goal of the strategy is international disarmament cooperation where the knowledge and experience of various mine action programs have been exchanged between Cambodia and other countries for several decades. More importantly, Cambodia has sent thousands of humanitarian deminers to many countries around the world under the UN peacekeeping mission.

Mr. Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As you might be aware, Cambodia is deeply saddened by the loss of four Cambodian peacekeepers during the attack on 8 May 2017 against the convoy of Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. Cambodia's peacekeepers have lost their lives while serving the UN mission with pride and courage.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is absolutely committed as member of state parties to comply with all the provisions of the Convention by ensuring the total clearance of all known APM in Cambodia by 2025. On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia I would like to thank all the donors for the continued support for mine action in Cambodia such Switzerland, Japan, Australia, United of America, and Norway, and welcome the emerging donor such as China for the contribution. This job will not be able to be completed without the support from all the stakeholders including development partners, operators, national and sub national authorities.

I also would like to take this opportunity to extend my profound gratitude to the APMBC ISU and state parties and other development partners for the continuous support to Cambodia's mine action.

Thank you.

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