

Intervention by Thailand
Updates by States Parties that have been granted extensions
on deadlines for implementing Article 5
During the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education
and Mine Action Technologies
21 or 22 May 2011

Co-Chairs,

Let me begin by providing you an update on the progress on mine clearance in Thailand since the 11th Meeting of the State Parties. Thailand has cleared confirmed hazardous areas of around 4.7 square kilometers, 0.6 square kilometers by manual clearance method and 4.1 square kilometers by Land Release method. Of all the cleared area by Land Release, 4.0 square kilometers were released through non-technical survey, while 0.1 through technical survey. Moreover, 0.15 square kilometer passed quality control procedures and these previously mine-affected areas have been handed over to the local authorities. This effort resulted in a reduction in Thailand's total contaminated area to 542.6 square kilometers.

Despite the fact that the number of released area is twice as much as the total number we have achieved last year, we realize that much needs to be done to keep up with the mine clearance schedule , provided during the submission of Thailand's extension request. Thailand plans to make use of the full range of Land Release method to increase our productivity in order to successfully meet our mine clearance deadline, given our resource constraints.

Co-Chairs,

During the 11th Meeting of the State Parties, Thailand reported the successful implementation of the two Land Release pilot projects undertaken in collaboration with the Norwegian People's Aid and APOPO. It is my pleasure to report that a number of significant progress have been made in this regard as follows.

Firstly, the national Land Release standard and guideline has been completed and incorporated into one chapter in the National Mine Action Standards. In this regard, we wish to thanks the Norwegian People's Aids for its valuable support in making our Land Release chapter comprehensive and relevant to the internationally accepted standard.

Secondly, technical trainings on Land Release with all of the four Humanitarian Mine Action Units (HMAUs) have been carried out by Thailand

Mine Action Centre. Furthermore, the Land Release method has been a key focus during the annual training of the newly recruited deminers earlier this year. The series of training aim to prompt our deminers to the full scale implementation of these methods as an integral part of national clearance activities.

Thirdly, TMAC has been conducting series of four workshops on land release in order to communicate to the local government agencies as well as non-governmental organizations, in the four HMAUs areas. Participants in the workshops are from various sectors, such as the village headmen, the local emergency health care providers, and the national park rangers, aim not only to create shared and correct understanding on the methods, but also to engage local communities into the land release process. At small group meetings during the workshops, participants are provided an opportunity to share their information and opinion which will contribute enormously to the Land Release process. We hope to systematize the engagement so that the benefit to the local community can be ensured. The first two workshops took place during the past two months, while the other two will take place in June and July this year.

Finally, as the land release method is now being used at full scale by all the HMAUs for the first time, our plan for the rest of this year is to closely monitor and evaluate the conduct of this technique and use this information to improve our land release plan as an integral part of the broader national demining scheme. Despite existing budget constraints, we are confident that we are on the right track and will continue to intensify our efforts to making full use of the plan and available resources.

Co-chairs,

As Thailand is committed to do our utmost to complete clearance of all mined areas by the extended deadline, we are aware that the unfinished demarcations with neighboring countries may post a delay in our mine clearance progress.

In this connection for the Thailand-Cambodian border, we welcome the result of the meeting of the Joint Working Group for the Implementation of the International Court of Justice Order on April 5th, 2012, in which Thailand and Cambodia agreed to task Thailand Mine Action Center and Cambodia Mine Action Center to demine required areas as will be agreed upon by both sides in the provisional demilitarized zone.

Events that pose significant risks to both Thai and Cambodian nationals such as the latest mine incident in May 2012 which maimed two Thai Officials should be totally eliminated. At the very least, we hope the incident could emphasize the imperative task of close cooperation between bordering Landmine

Convention States Parties. At the same time, we would like to encourage both States Parties and States not Parties that face similar limitations due to non-demarcated borders to prioritize cooperation for the benefits of innocent people in the area.

I thank you, co-chairs.
