

Intervention of H.E. Sam Sotha, Royal Government of Cambodia

Mine Action Authority

on Stockpile Destruction 31 January 2002

Thank you Mr Co-Chair for the opportunity allowing me to speak briefly on stockpile destruction in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

In recognising the importance of the great danger posed by anti-personnel mines, the Royal Government of Cambodia has been a committed supporter of the Ottawa Treaty. This commenced with the signing of the treaty and subsequent ratification in July 1999; the promulgation of the national law to ban APL by His Majesty the King was an important step for our country.

Mr Co-chair, as you well know, Cambodia endured over 2 decades of conflict leaving not only a legacy of mines in the ground, but also the inevitable stockpiles of the weapon. The Royal Government of Cambodia has reported the destruction of all stockpiles under the terms of the treaty but, not surprisingly, we continue to discover previously unknown caches/stockpiles from time to time. One such stockpile of more than 3000 mines was destroyed in Kampong Chhnang on 14 January 2002.

In September 2000, the Royal Government of Cambodia established the CMAA to coordinate, manage and regulate mine action in the Kingdom; this includes managing the implementation of our national mine-ban law, and the International Mine Ban Treaty. We will coordinate with local authorities, national police, and military units to ensure that any unofficial stockpiles are reported, located and destroyed. Cambodia has encountered no difficulties in the destruction process which is carried out by CMAC on behalf of CMAA in accordance with national law.

Thank you.