

General Status of the Implementation of the Convention
Statement by H.E. Ambassador Chaiyong Satjipanon,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva,
On Behalf of the President of the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties
21 June 2004

Co-Chairs,
Colleagues,

It has been the practice at the beginning of the week of Standing Committees for an address to be delivered by or on behalf of the President, on the general status of the implementation of the Convention. It is therefore a great honour for me to deliver this statement on behalf of His Excellency Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, the President of the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties.

You may recall that the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties which was held in Bangkok in September last year has set out a number of important goals which, among those, are:

First, to continue to focus in the period leading to the First Review Conference, on those areas most directly related to the core humanitarian aims of the Convention, namely, clearing mined land, assisting victims, destroying stockpiled anti-personnel mines and universalizing of the Convention;

Second, to ensure that, prior to the First Review Conference, mine-affected States Parties and those in the process of destroying stockpiled anti-personnel mines put in place plans consistent with the Convention's deadlines, take concrete steps to implement the plans, and use the opportunity presented by the Intersessional Work Programme to present their problems, plans, progress and priorities for assistance;

Third, we asked States Parties in a position to do so to renew their commitment to ensure sustainability of resources necessary to implement the Convention, while at the same time, we called upon mine-affected States Parties, the United Nations, the World Bank and other organizations to integrate mine action into all relevant humanitarian and development activities;

Fourth, the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties also highlighted the importance of victim assistance. We called upon all parties concerned to meet the enormous challenges of mine action, including victim assistance, and to provide technical and financial assistance required. We called upon all mine-affected States Parties to act with urgency to provide for care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of landmine victims, taking into account the specific needs of victims, their families and their communities.

The President of the 5MSP also issued a programme of action which, other than the goals I mentioned, also highlighted in particular the importance of information exchanges, awareness building, and regional initiatives.

Please allow me to update you on the progresses made since the 5MSP.

On **universalization**, I am pleased first of all that the number of States Parties has increased since the 5MSP which was 134 to 142 with Estonia recently joining the Convention. We are hoping that with tremendous efforts by all parties concerned, particularly with Canada as the Coordinator of the Universalization Contact Group, by the time that we reach the First Review Conference, the number of States Parties will rise to 150. It should be noted though that many States not Parties to the Convention also have indicated that they share the

humanitarian principles of the Convention and since the Convention has entered into force, there have been reports of declining use of anti-personnel mines. Global production of anti-personnel mines has been reduced dramatically. At one time over fifty States produced anti-personnel mines. Thirty eight of these States are now parties to the Convention and have ceased their production. Trade in anti-personnel mines has also decreased significantly to a low level of illicit trafficking. Several States not Parties have also put in place indefinite moratoria on the export of anti-personnel mines.

On **mine clearance**, of the 50 States that have reported mined areas or which are known to be mine-affected, 2 (Costa Rica and Djibouti) have reported that they have completed implementation of their obligations to clear anti-personnel mines. Progresses are also being made in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, and in a number of other countries. Over 2 billion USD has been generated since 1997 for the work of the Convention; most of which has been directed towards mine clearance and related activities. However, much still remains to be done and assistance is definitely needed to ensure that mine-affected states can meet their obligations as set by the Convention.

On **stockpile destruction**, I am pleased to inform that to date 122 States Parties to the Convention no longer hold stockpiled anti-personnel mines. The most recent country which has completed its stockpile destruction is Lithuania which just became a mine-free country on 7 June. Altogether States Parties have destroyed almost 31.5 million anti-personnel mines. Nevertheless, approximately 9 million additional anti-personnel mines are held by the newest States Parties to the Convention and hence will be destroyed within four years. Thus, this will remain a challenging task ahead of us.

On **victim assistance**, we have noted that increasingly States together with non-governmental organizations and all parties concerned have made dramatic efforts to support the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of landmine survivors, within the context of national development. Work is also currently being undertaken in the context of the United Nations to finalize the Draft Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. We certainly need to work closely together to address the plight of mine victims and to assist them in such a way as to enable them to live with dignity and to be able to attain their full human potential.

As I mentioned before that the President of the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties has highlighted in his action programme the importance of regional initiatives to raise awareness on the issue of anti-personnel mines in the process leading to the First Review Conference, I am, therefore, pleased that a number of regional seminars had been organized in Ouagadougou, Nairobi, Bucharest, Dushanbe, Amman and most recently in Vilnius. These regional exchanges of views and experiences have been of practical use. I hope that by the time that we meet in Nairobi we will be able to develop a more comprehensive and clearer view of the magnitude of the problems of anti-personnel mines in different regions of the world and their progresses in meeting the core humanitarian aims of the Convention.

To conclude, I wish to encourage participants from mine-affected countries to use this session of the Intersessional Work Programme to convey their 4Ps, namely, their problems, national plans, progresses, and priorities for assistance in addressing the issue of anti-personnel mines within their national contexts. I hope that when we meet again at the Nairobi Summit, my Foreign Minister, as the President of the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties, will be in a position to report more progresses which will have been made, and we will be moving much closer towards a mine-free world.

I thank you for your kind attention.