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Intervention by the Delegation of Thailand
during the Consideration of the General Status and Operation of
the Convention: (b) Assisting the victims
at the 13rd Meeting of the States Parties to Mine Ban Convention
Tuesday, 3 December 2013

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

As a country with a number of mine survivors, Thailand has strived to fulfill its obligation to provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims. In addressing the needs of mine survivors, Thailand has developed a holistic and integrated approach in order to ensure sustainability of our effort to provide assistance to mine victims, from emergency medical service, healthcare to empowering persons with disabilities as well as social and economic inclusion.

By adopting a number of relevant international law and obligations including the Mine Ban Convention, the Cartagena Action Plan, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, Thailand has revised relevant national policies, plans, programmes, and most importantly legal frameworks in order to become an inclusive, non-discrimination and rights-based society for every Thai citizens including persons with disabilities, mine victims and their families. Important legal developments are, for example, the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act of 2007, which provides a comprehensive legal and institutional framework regarding rights and entitlements for persons with disabilities, and the Emergency Medical Service Act of 2008 which guarantees and protects rights to access to emergency medical services.

Mr. President,

Thailand is proud to have in place a good legal framework to address rights and needs of mine victims. At the same time, we realize that there are still implementation challenges remain to be addressed. We found that a number of persons with disabilities, including mine victims, experience difficulties in accessing available services because most of them live in the remote areas. To

address this issue, the Thai government is taking a proactive step to improve accessibility by further empowering partnered organizations, especially the local ones. This year, the Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Acts is revised to encourage full and active participation of all stakeholders in the implementation process. The revisions include, for example, increasing role of disabled persons organizations (DPOs) to better represent and provide services to persons with disabilities with financial support from the Fund for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. The revised Acts requires that local service centers for persons with disabilities be established to help answer needs of persons with disabilities living in the responsible areas. The revision also allows delegation of power to the local administrative authorities in terms of budget management. For example, the local administrative authorities are allowed to establish their own funds to support activities of community learning centers as well as volunteer network for persons with disabilities in their responsible area.

For the emergency medical services, the National Institute for Emergency Medicine (NIEM) has been given priority to the improvement of the service coverage. The National Emergency Medical Service Board consists of all stakeholders including representatives from local government. The Emergency Medical Funds is managed in the way to support full operation of emergencies medical services across the country, including to compensate operational units in the area where there are insufficient operators. The NIEM has consistently conducted annual symposium for all stakeholders to discuss ways to better improve coverage and quality of emergency medical services.

Mr. President,

Including in Thailand's master plan for victim assistance is a goal to share our good practices and lesson-learned on victim assistance with other affected countries. Over the past year, a number of activities have been done to fulfill this pledge. To name just a few, Thailand has offered a field visit to prostheses and wheelchair centers as part of the side event of the Bangkok Symposium on Enhancing Cooperation and Assistance hosted during 23-24 June 2013 in Bangkok. In August, Thailand has shared our experience on victim assistance during the study programme on the country's humanitarian mine action for Myanmar delegation from agencies including public health and social welfare development. The NIEM also provides a one-month training course on emergency medical service for Myanmar medical team. It is my pleasure to once again express our willingness to share experience to other mine affected countries.

Mr. President,

Thailand continues to strive for a zero – victim and mine free world. While that goal is still being realized, Thailand remains fully committed to providing the best possible victim assistance programs to mine survivors.

Thank you. Mr. President.
