

**Intervention by the Delegation of Thailand during  
the Consideration of the General Status and  
Operation of the Convention:  
(b) Clearing mined areas**

**at the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties  
to Mine Ban Convention**

**Wednesday, 4 December 2013**

\*\*\*\*\*

Mr. President,

It is my pleasure to take the floor to share with you our progress made in fulfilling our mine clearance obligations the past year. Allow me to provide this meeting with a brief update on clearing of mined areas and mine risk education activities, as well as our effort made to enhance our capacity in these two areas.

Mr. President,

This year marks the second year that Thailand has employed the Land Release technique at full scale. We are pleased to share with this meeting that since the beginning of this year until the end of September, Thailand has been able to clear a total 25.53 square kilometers of confirmed hazardous areas employing this technique. This number is 5 times higher than the

number we achieved annually before using the technique and almost one-third higher than the results we achieved during the same period last year.

Productivity is, however, not our only focus. Safety of innocent civilians has always been the guiding principle for our humanitarian mine action. With this in mind, we have consistently conducted mine risk education activities in order to raise awareness especially in high risk populations. From the beginning of this year, TMAC has conducted 197 risk education activities in 185 affected villages. Participants in those activities are local students, teachers, government officials and villagers totaling 79,038 persons. TMAC has not only conducted training for their officers on risk education techniques but has also sought cooperation with local government offices and schools in the implementation phase. With this already proven successful strategy, we hope that the number of accidents will continue to decline.

Moreover, in order to ensure the safety of the released areas for civilian use, TMAC has strictly followed all the safety protocols guided by the International Mine Action Standard and used this as a baseline for quality management. During the past year, TMAC has conducted 20 quality control activities, and 5 quality assurance activities. These enabled TMAC to release a total of 32.16 square kilometers as safe areas for civilian

use. This also translates into a reduction of the country's confirmed hazardous areas to 502.73 square kilometers from 2,557 square kilometers in 2001.

Mr. President,

Guided by the Cartagena Action Plan, Thailand takes into full account of its Article 5 obligation by developing, implementing and regularly reviewing national mine action strategies, as reflected in our National Mine Action Standard. Since the adoption of the Land Release technique, we have strived to further improve these techniques to better suit the circumstances of Thailand. Over the past year, the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) has conducted various related workshops to revise the standard of procedure for the effective implementation of the 2012 National Mine Action Standard in which the Land Release constitutes an important part. The revision also aims to overcome operational challenges, such as density of vegetation and weather conditions, in order to enhance effectiveness of our demining operation.

As mentioned earlier, the safety of local civilians and their communities is the primary focus of Thailand's humanitarian mine action. In order to ensure that, based on our lessons learned and against our limited resources and challenges, better planning and priority setting are needed. Next year, TMAC is planning to intensively

conduct a land prioritization in order to categorize mined areas by the degree of their socio-economic impact. This prioritization will be used as a guideline for our mine clearance operation in the future as we aim to achieve a zero-victim and mine-free world.

Mr. President,

Before I conclude, allow me to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to all partnered Governmental Organizations and Non- Governmental Organizations working to support Thailand's mine clearance effort. The United States Pacific Command (PACOM), the Norwegian People's Aid and APOPO. I would also like to, especially, thank PACOM for continuously providing mine detection and EOD training to IMAC; APOPO for its commitment to conduct field operations successfully in one of our most difficult to access mine ridden areas; and NPA for its contribution to the successful implementation of the Land Release technique, which has significantly enhanced our demining effort over the past two years.

Thank you. Mr. President.