
**Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention
on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel
Mines and on Their Destruction**

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Consideration of requests submitted under Article 5**Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the
destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with
article 5 of the convention****Executive summary****Submitted by Thailand**

1. Most mined areas in Thailand stem from Cambodia's internal conflict, (1970s–1990s), which spilled over the Thai-Cambodia border, and the Communist insurgency in the region, (1960s–1980s). The areas most contaminated with landmines areas are along Thailand's borders with its neighbouring countries, especially, the Thai-Cambodian border.
2. As one of the earliest members of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (since 1 May 1999), Thailand established the Thailand Mine Action Centre (TMAC) under the Ministry of Defence to spearhead mine action in the country. Three Non-Government Organizations, (NGOs), the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), the Thai Civilian Deminers Association (TDA), and Peace Road Organization Foundation (PRO) also operate in Thailand under the supervision of TMAC.
3. The initial Landmine Impact Survey carried out in Thailand, (2000–2001), identified a total of 2,556,700,000 square metres of suspected area to be addressed. The survey results were later found to lack precision and grossly overestimated the magnitude of the actual contaminated area.
4. During the 2000s, Thailand addressed this challenge through a heavy reliance on manual clearance. Such techniques were later deemed to be time and resource consuming if not done in combination with other techniques. Between 2001 and December 31, 2008, Thailand had released 2,028,350,000 square metres, representing 80 percent of the original reported challenge. At the end of Thailand's first extension, Thailand's remaining challenge was 528,350,000 square metres.
5. Due to various circumstances, including the magnitude of the challenge, Thailand requested an extension of its Article 5 deadline and submitted its first extension request to the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties in 2008, which subsequently extended the deadline for completion by nine and a half years, until 1 November 2018. Since the period of its first extension request submitted in 2008 until 31 December 2016, Thailand has released 154,836,328 square metres. The latest statistics available until 31 July 2017 shows that Thailand has released an additional 167,713,524 square metres, leaving a total of square



metres 409,727,979 square metres to address, or 16.03 percent of the original reported challenge.

6. This progress has been made possible by the strengthening of operations in the following areas:

(a) **Shift in Land Release Methodology:** From 2000–2011, Thailand invested heavily on physical survey and clearance as the primary way to release suspected areas. Using this method Thailand released an average of 2,419,856 square metres per year, nearly entirely from clearance. Beginning in 2007–2008, TMAC introduced Locating Minefield Procedure (LMP)¹ as a new method in its arsenal. The LMP yielded very positive results and was the beginning of Non-Technical Survey (NTS) in Thailand. From 2012 onwards, progress was greatly enhanced, with an average of 30,000,000 square metres being released per year.

(b) **The Pilot Project:** Since January 2016, TMAC and NPA have collaborated on a "Pilot Project" to resurvey suspected contaminated areas considered to have been previously overestimated by the LIS. The initial results of the project indicated that many suspected areas are in fact mine-free. A comprehensive analysis of the findings to date indicates that only around 0.22–13.5 percent of the suspected areas are actually contaminated. Therefore, Thailand can foresee cancelling 86.5 percent of the remaining suspected areas, bringing Thailand much closer to mine-free status. The Pilot Project will continue in the coming years, and its progress and estimated date of completion will be updated.

(c) **Strengthened Community Engagement:** TMAC places importance in building strong relations with the local population and authorities. This not only supports the on-going NTS efforts but also assists in raising awareness of the hazards of landmines, a core obligation of the Convention. Statistics show a steady decrease in landmine accidents in recent years.

(d) **Impact of Clearance on Socio-economic Development:** The LIS reported that the presence of landmines and UXO resulted in blocked access to, or restricted use of four major resources: forest, cropland, pasture, and water. Thus, it was recognized that the important socio-economic dimension will be increasingly taken into account along with the humanitarian impact. Thailand sees mine action as truly a humanitarian initiative. All lands being released Thailand takes into account how such land can be put to productive use and improve the livelihoods of the local community.

(e) **Strong Commitment towards Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA):** Thailand has demonstrated that an inter-disciplinary community-based approach to mine action can yield dividends that transcend the technical aspects of demining. Thailand has given high priority to promote Mine Risk Education (MRE) to reduce the risk of injury from mines and unexploded ordnance by raising awareness and promoting behavioural changes through public-information campaigns, education and training, and liaison with communities. Thailand has adopted a holistic and integrated approach to Victim Assistance (VA), with comprehensive measures that closely correspond with obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and integrated into the broader legal framework, national plans and programs for persons with disabilities in general. In 2016, Thailand was a Member and Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance under the Convention.

(f) **Capacity Building and Strengthened Cooperation at the National Level:** Mine clearance and humanitarian mine action are high on the agenda of the Royal Thai Government, with emphasis on direction, funding, and capacity building. Thailand

¹ Thailand's Revised Extension Request Received 2 October 2008: "The purpose of the (LMP) procedure was as follows: a) To record, mark and gather sufficient mine information in order to help plan effective future demining operations, b) To recheck the suspected mine/UXO contaminated areas as identified by the LIS in order to be more precise and clear, c) To increase the area of safe land for people to maximize benefits and to reduce the hazards of uncleared land, d) To use as a template for other dangerous areas all over the country".

recognizes the importance of focusing on the task of building closer relations with partners and counterparts, as well as supporting related agencies in capacity building.

(g) **Enhanced International Cooperation:** Thailand has supported closer cooperation among States Parties, which has helped create better mutual understanding, and reconciliation, as well as foster sustainable development in the bilateral and regional contexts. On the bilateral level, Thailand has and will continue to push for more robust consultation mechanisms on border issues, which includes further engagement with Mine Action Centres and related bodies from neighbouring countries. At the regional level, Thailand has supported and participated in a number of joint exercises under the ASEAN Framework.

(h) **Better Information Management:** Before 2015, progress reports were submitted and collated at a national level. This did not allow disaggregation of by Province. Thailand continues to support the continued improvement of its information management system, supported by robust national standards that are based on international mine action standards (IMAS).

7. Thailand's first extension for completion will expire on 1 November 2018. In order to fulfil its Article 5 obligations, Thailand is requesting a second extension of 5 years, from 1 November 2018 – 31 December 2023. The Plan of Work has been developed in 2 Phases. Phase one will be carried out from January 2017 leading up to Thailand's deadline of 1 November 2018 and Phase 2 will be carried out during the second extension period of 5 years is given below. Thailand estimates annual progress to proceed as follows: 72,120,000 square metres in 2019, 72,060,000 square metres in 2020, 73,230,000 square metres in 2021, 74,540,000 square metres 2022 and 66,860,000 square metres in 2023. Thailand estimates that the cost for operations during the extension period will total 1,208,601,183 Baht.

8. **Phase 1:** During this phase, Thailand aims to release a total of 63,796,040 square metres of the suspected contaminated area, resulting in a remaining challenge of 358,809,132 square metres remaining to be addressed. Between 1 January–31 July 2017, Thailand has addressed 12,877,196 square metres, reducing its remaining challenge from 422,605,172 square metres to 409,727,976 square metres, 16.03 percent of the original challenge. This results in a plan to address a remaining 50,918,844 square metres during the period of August 2017–October 2018. During this phase, Thailand will also start to prepare for the second extension period so as to ensure continuation of work. Thailand will submit an updated work plan to States Parties, through its Annual Article 7 Report in 2019, after Phase 1 is complete.

9. **Phase 2:** Phase 2 will focus on areas which are pending survey, undergoing demarcation, or involved in border related security issues. Thailand refers to these areas as Area to be Demarcated (AD)²³. These areas cover 358,809,132 square metres in 12 Provinces bordering 3 countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar). Thailand has come up with a comprehensive strategy to expedite work in the challenging AD. This also includes enhanced diplomatic engagement with neighbouring countries which could lead to joint operations, an internal reshuffling of staff, and the possible introduction of civilian deminers. Thailand estimates that the work during the extension period will require a total of 1,208,601,183 Thai Baht with 125,000,000 anticipated from sources other than the Government.

10. In preparation for Phase 2, TMAC will gradually reshuffle its staff to meet the demands of more NTS as shown on page, 31 of the full text of the request. Overall, staff will be reallocated to expand the NTS team.

11. In May 2017, Thailand established the National Committee for Mine Action chaired by the Prime Minister of Thailand. The Committee aims to foster policy direction and pull

² The use of the term Area to be Demarcated (AD) in this Request as well as the demining operations to be conducted in implementing Thailand's obligations under this Convention shall be without prejudice to Thailand's rights and duties with regard to the land boundary under international law.

³ See Chapter IV and V for more information on AD.

together all necessary assets to expedite efforts towards Thailand's strong commitment to meeting the obligations under the Convention. The Committee meets on an annual basis. Each of TMAC's field team comprises of a survey team and clearance team. In the past, after the survey team completes its survey; it will wait for the clearance team to finish clearance before both teams move to a new location. This method is inefficient as one team has to wait for the other. Therefore, TMAC will start employing a new method that sees the survey team move to survey another nearby site while the clearance team completes clearance in the previous one. Such continuous flow of work will help save cost and address land more effectively, yielding quicker results.

12. Thailand has always been unique in the sense that nearly all demining work, including funding in the country are from military. Only a small fraction is done by civilians from the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA). However, the right to destroy mines and related ordnances still is solely military. This may change in the coming years due to the complications and related security concerns that military personnel pose when entering border areas. To be able to work in these complicated areas during the period of the extension, TMAC plans to start training a new batch of civilian deminers since civilians have easier access to border areas to carry out demining with less complications. TMAC therefore plans to work even closer with the two main Mine Action NGOs in Thailand, TDA and NPA.

13. Thailand has been continuously assessing the possibility of a joint operation with neighbouring countries. The idea has been on the bilateral discussion table, most recently with Cambodia, and comes from a shared view that demining is a humanitarian initiative that both countries can mutually benefit from returning safe land for livelihood and economic development. Joint operations, however, do not denote two demining teams from different nationalities mixing with each other to work in a location in one country. Such formulation would be complicated to manage and could produce security and international law-related concerns. Therefore, a joint operation denotes two demining teams from neighbouring countries working in their own territory but in parallel with each other along the border line. There would be regular information, expertise, and progress sharing to expedite work for both countries. A joint secretariat would be set up to facilitate cross communication.

14. Thailand believes that pilot joint operations between two NPA teams would be a good start, since NPA works in many counties with common mine problems with Thailand.

15. Thailand projects three possible risks which could hinder completion of the work plan outlined in this request. First is the uncertainty regarding access to certain areas in the border areas, many of which are subject to pending survey and demarcation, plus talks between Thailand and its neighbours; third, are factors or causes beyond the control of the demining teams, such as natural disasters and bad weather conditions.
