

Statement by the Delegation of Thailand
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Director General of the Thailand Mine Action Center
Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, Switzerland
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Agenda 9(b): Clearing Mined areas

Madam President,

It goes without saying that the Ottawa Convention's journey has been a remarkable one. We have achieved so much together. Yet, there remains much to be done, that we have to and must do.

For the past 20 years, the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) with the support from domestic and international partners, utilizing a community-centered approach, and more recently, the Land Release methodology, have been working tirelessly so that future generations do not have to. To date, TMAC has returned over 2,000 sq. km. of landmine contaminated areas back to communities, destroyed over 30,000 landmines and saved hundreds, if not thousands of lives. Until 31 October 2023, our new extended deadline, our missions are to complete the remaining 360 sq. km. or the last 14 percent of the total contamination.

Madam President,

Since 2017, we have been preparing ourselves for work in the most challenging areas along the Thai border, with harsh terrains and environments and on-going border related discussions with our neighbours. In September, we updated our National Mine Action Standard (NMAS) to meet the latest international standards, while our personnel have been undergoing intense trainings on Non-Technical Survey (NTS), which reflects our commitment to transition to a Land Release-based approach. Our goal is to be able to work at a faster pace, with improved efficiency while remaining committed to ensuring safety at the highest levels. The initial results have been promising. This year alone, we released 3 provinces, namely, Uttaradit bordering Lao PDR, Tak bordering Myanmar and Yala bordering Malaysia.

Madam President,

Currently, Thailand and Cambodia are planning to cooperate on border demining, which is in the concluding stages of discussions. Both sides have had several rounds of productive exchanges, including visits at the highest levels, as well as on-site surveys. We hope to be able to identify possible areas for the cooperation in the coming months. I take this opportunity to thank the Government of Cambodia for the close coordination on this initiative and look forward to its early commencement.

We are carefully working to evaluate the progress we have made to date in order to update our work plan that will guide us through our second extension period. To honour our commitment, we gave in Vienna last year, we will submit this updated work plan during the first quarter of next year.

Madam President,

Despite significant challenges, the achievements collectively accomplished in the last two decades offer much promise that a world free of landmines is possible. We are confident that if mine action efforts remain comprehensive and focused on people and institutions in mine affected states, our vision for a world free of mine by 2025 is still within reach.

Thank you.
