



Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

PRESIDENT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES

19 September 2003

**STATES PARTIES TO THE MINE BAN CONVENTION
COMMIT TO ONGOING VIGOROUS ACTION**

Bangkok—States Parties to the Convention banning anti-personnel mines concluded their first-ever meeting in Asia today, committing themselves to pursue with renewed vigour efforts to clear mines, assist victims, destroy existing stockpiles of mines and universalise the ban on this weapon.

Over a period of five days, delegates from over 100 countries, both States Parties and States not party to the Convention, exchanged views and experiences and shared aspirations and inspirations. The delegates counted among their number policy makers, representatives of the United Nations agencies, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, and particularly mine victims and mine survivors themselves.

“We have greatly benefited from the information shared by mine affected States about their problems, their national plans, the progress they have made and their priorities for assistance,” said Dr. Sorajak Kasemsuvan, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand. States Parties reaffirmed their commitment to assist mine-affected States in their effort to eradicate landmines within the 10-year timeframe.

With eight States having joined the Convention since its fourth annual meeting in September 2002, the number of States having accepted the Convention now stands at 136. Together, these States have destroyed over 30 million stockpiled mines and made major advances in clearing mine-affected areas. However, the meeting also noted that efforts must continue.

The meeting highlighted the plight of mine victims and survivors, stressing the urgent need to increase resource mobilisation for mine action, particularly victim assistance. Mine action needs to take a comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach, addressed within the context of national social and economic development. Worldwide, over US\$ 1.6 billion has been generated in funding for mine action since the Convention was established in 1997, and mine-affected States themselves have made sizeable contributions to mine action within their borders.

“In the year ahead, Thailand will work actively and closely with States Parties, the ICBL [International Campaign to Ban Landmines] and the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross]. We will also encourage greater involvement of States not party to the Convention,” said Dr. Sorajak. As President of the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties, Thailand intends to ensure that progress in implementing the core humanitarian objectives of the Convention be achieved. Dr. Sorajak added that Thailand counted on the cooperation and support of other States Parties.

The meeting was also significant in that the States Parties decided on a number of measures to prepare for the first five-year review of the Convention, which will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, between 29 November and 3 December 2004. Thailand will serve as President of the Convention until the First Review Conference in Nairobi, when Austria will take over.

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