

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Chaiyong Satjipanon,
Permanent Representative of Thailand
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations
in Geneva,
at the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties (6MSP)
of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention,
Zagreb, Croatia,
28 November 2005**

**Madam President,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I wish to express my heart-felt appreciation to the Government of Croatia for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangement of the Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (the 6MSP). Let me also commend you, Madam President, for your able leadership and guidance, which I believe will lead our meeting to a successful conclusion. My deep admiration also goes to Ms. Dijana Plestina, Secretary General of the 6MSP, Ambassador Wolfgang Petritsch, President of the First Review Conference, and all members of the Coordinating Committee, for their hard work and dedication in advancing the core objectives of the Convention, including the preparation of the Zagreb Progress Report and the Zagreb Declaration.

It is both timely and meaningful that after the 5MSP in Bangkok, Thailand and the First Review Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, our current meeting at the states parties level is hosted once again by another mine-affected country, Croatia, in her beautiful capital city, Zagreb. This symbolic continuity not only helps reinforce our awareness about the plight and the pain anti-personnel mines have caused to the innocent, but also deepens a shared sense of

urgency in fulfilling the obligations under the Convention. The Nairobi Plan of Action adopted at the conclusion of the First Review Conference last December lays out a clear and comprehensive framework for desired implementations during the period of 2005 to 2009. I, therefore, wish to take this opportunity to share with you Thailand's progress in overview along the line of the Action Plan during the past year.

After the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines was achieved in 2003, Thailand has re-directed its resources to improve on the other two priorities, namely mine clearance and victim assistance. During 2004 to August 2005, the pace of mine clearance has accelerated, with the areas cleared of mines totaling over 2 million square meters (2,725,069 sq.m.). This number amounts to more than double of the de-mined areas of the four years earlier combined (1,162,236 sq.m. during 2000-2003). The progress partly stems from accumulative learning, better use of existing equipment and technology, and cooperation with both domestic and international partners. In order to carry the momentum forward, Thailand has also enhanced mine clearance collaboration with domestic NGOS as well as both states parties and states outside the Convention. In July 2005, Thailand signed a bilateral agreement with China for exchanges of trainers and mine clearance technology. At the same time, Thailand and Cambodia are exploring the possibility of jointly de-mining the border areas which have promising economic potential.

Despite the improving trend, areas proclaimed to be mine-contaminated in Thailand remains considerable. With the country's mine clearance obligation deadline coming up in May 2009 (or a little less than 4 years from now), international cooperation is needed more than ever. Thailand wishes that our determination to meet the obligation deadline would not be

taken lightly and we look forward to working closely together with all interested countries and agencies.

Besides mine clearance, victim assistance is another priority area in which Thailand has attentively worked on. In 2005, Thailand Mine Action Center has developed the Master Plan for Thailand Humanitarian Mine Action 2005-2009 and also been in close consultation with relevant public agencies and NGOs to finalize the Master Plan for Victim Assistance. The two Master Plans will be submitted to the National Committee for Humanitarian Mine Action for endorsement and possibly for further integration into the 10th National Socioeconomic Development Plan, which covers the period of 2007 to 2011.

In addition, Thailand still attaches great importance to awareness-raising and cooperation, especially at the regional level. Thailand sees the continuity of regional workshops and seminars as one of the crucial mechanisms in moving the Convention forward.

Madam President,

Looking into the future, I see many challenges remaining for Thailand to overcome. However, let me assure you that we will do our utmost to strengthen partnership among public agencies, civil society and private actors in order to put our commitments to the Convention into practice. We will also reach out to concerned countries and international agencies with the hope that they could enhance their cooperation with us in our fight against these insuperable odds.

Madam President,

At the First Review Conference in Nairobi last year, we have collectively paved the groundwork for our future implementation and

cooperation. This year in Croatia, let us make our gathering another success in charting the course of our work together for the year to come. With the mine clearance deadline for the first group of affected countries approaching in a little over than 3 years and with the Second Review Conference coming up in about 4 years from now, we certainly cannot afford to be complacent. The renewed credibility of the Convention lies in our actions and cooperation today. I hope that all of us here would put the best of our efforts to move the process of the Convention forward and I do wish all of you a great success. Thank you.
