

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

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, upon your election to the Presidency of the Seventh 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. I would also like to commend you on your hard work and dedication in advancing the core objectives of the Convention, including the preparation of the Geneva Progress Report. My delegation firmly believes that under your able leadership and guidance, this meeting will reach a successful conclusion.

**Madam President,**

On this very same day nine years ago, the Mine-Ban Convention was concluded. Thailand is pleased to learn that as of September this year, a total of 151 States have joined the Convention, which means that approximately 80 per cent of all States worldwide are now legally bound by this document. Certainly, we have come a long way towards fulfilling the objectives of the Convention. Nevertheless, much more work remains to be done. The Convention, with its promise of forever ending, for all people, the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines, has set high expectations. As we speak, someone may have just suffered the loss of life or limb because of anti-personnel landmines. We cannot afford to remain idle and we need to carry on with our work, both at the national and international levels, so that we can truly and meaningfully achieve the aims of the Convention.

### Mine Clearance

**Madam President,**

Allow me now to share with you an overview of Thailand's work during the past year. Since 2005, the pace of mine clearance in Thailand has accelerated significantly, with the areas cleared of mines totaling over 16.4 million square metres (16,435,989 sq.m.) from January 2005 to July 2006. This number amounts to more than five times the de-mined areas of the previous four years combined (3,173,445 sq.m. during the years 2000 – 2004). Since the 6MSP, a total of 8,861,062 square metres of mine-contaminated areas have been cleared and returned to the local community. In order to carry this momentum forward, the Thailand Mine Action Center or TMAC has adopted a two-pronged approach. While continuing with its regular mine clearance operations, TMAC started using the area reduction method in 2005, which is a combination between random checking of suspected areas and using a database on area utilization during the last 5 to 10 years.

In addition, TMAC has drafted a proposal for an area reduction survey of landmine-contaminated areas. It is estimated that, after the survey, suspected landmine-contaminated areas in Thailand would be reduced by 80 per cent (from 2,557,000,000 square metres to 500,000,000 square metres). With the more specific and precise data on mine-affected areas, TMAC would be able to plan its mine-action programmes more effectively and, hence, continue the accelerating pace of mine clearance within the country.

### Victim Assistance

**Madam President,**

In addition to mine clearance, assisting mine victims is another priority for Thailand. The Master Plan on Victim Assistance for 2007 – 2011, which was developed by TMAC,

was finalized in December 2005. TMAC is also in the process of finalizing the Master Plan for Mine Risk Education for 2007 – 2011. These two Master Plans will serve as the basis for all agencies working on victim assistance, mine risk education and mine awareness in Thailand. They will also serve as guidelines for all concerned agencies in developing their own specific work plans and projects.

Thailand also attaches great importance to awareness raising both at the national and international levels. At the national level, in April 2006, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with some NGOs, jointly organized a Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. At the international level, the landmine issue has been highlighted in several fora. During Thailand's Chairmanship of the Human Security Network from June 2005 to May 2006, Thailand gave renewed emphasis to the landmine issue, which was incorporated into the Thai Chair's Plan of Action and the thematic discussion of the Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Human Security Network in June 2006 in Bangkok.

It must also be stressed that such progress and achievements made so far would not have been possible without a spirit of "partnership". Thailand is committed to do its utmost to strengthen partnerships with relevant stakeholders at all levels in our strife to fulfill our commitments under the Convention.

Thailand is among the first group of mine-affected countries with our mine clearance deadline approaching just over 2 years from now. Although we still have a considerable way to go, Thailand is confident that with the unceasing efforts of, and the partnership among, all stakeholders, the common goal of a mine-free world is not too far from our reach. It rests upon all of us here today to exert the best of our efforts to realize the noble aims of the Convention. I wish all of us every success in this endeavour.

Thank you.

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