

**Statement by Dr. Virachai Plasai,
Director-General of the Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand
on preventing and suppressing prohibited acts and facilitating compliance
(Item 12(e)(iii))
at the Ninth Meeting of States Parties
to the Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, Switzerland
28 November 2008

Mr. President,

For many decades, landmines have killed and maimed countless innocent victims. After long and arduous negotiations, the international community produced the Mine Ban Convention of 1997, in the hope of ensuring that existing landmines are eradicated and no new mines are planted. That spirit of hope and the integrity of the Convention, however, are facing a setback. Due to the importance and the urgency of the matter, Thailand was compelled to bring to the attention of States Parties the facts relating to an incident which, in our view, constitutes a clear violation of the Convention.

Mr. President,

In the interest of preserving the integrity, the principle of humanitarianism, as well as the cooperative spirit of the Mine Ban Convention, a process of clarification must be set up and conducted in a constructive way within the framework of the Convention. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that this matter be dealt with in a transparent way. This being said, let me underline that Thailand has no intention of accusing any state party or politicizing this matter. Thailand has exercised utmost restraint to avoid jumping to conclusion. Rather, we have taken the appropriate step to request clarification from Cambodia via bilateral channel in accordance with Article 8(1) of the Convention.

Mr. President,

At this stage, Thailand is still ready to consider any options within the framework of Article 8(1) that would allow us to shed light on the 6 October incident, including the setting up of an international fact finding mission under your Good Offices, Mr. President, to be entrusted with a precise mandate, and with the participation of third parties and non-State actors, and the cooperation of the Implementation Support Unit of the GICHD. We thank you, Mr. President, for your constructive proposal in this regard. We pledge to you our full support and cooperation.

For the sake of transparency and in keeping with the spirit of the Convention, we request the Meeting to take note of the exercise by the President of his good office role and that this be duly reflected in the official documents of this Meeting of the States Parties.

We hope the above proposal will receive the support of the Meeting, in order that there will be no need for further action under Article 8 of the Convention. We reiterate our commitment to contribute to any clarification process that will be set up in a cooperative manner.

Thank you.
