

Draft
Statement of the Thai Delegation
On Victim Assistance
at the Meetings of the Standing Committee of the Mine Ban Convention
Geneva, 8-10 May 2006

Co-Chairs,
Friends and Colleagues,

Allow me to update you on the ongoing victim assistance process in Thailand, which is one of the most important tasks among our obligations under the Mine Ban convention.

As a follow up to the 6MSP in Zagreb, I would like to highlight some developments regarding landmine victim assistance in Thailand as follows:

- Figures in 2005 show a positive sign. The number of mine casualties has been reduced from 24 persons in 2004 to 18 persons in 2005, with one killed and 17 injured.

- Database collection of landmine victims in Thailand is still in progress through the joint cooperation of government agencies concerned.

- The Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) conducted regular consultations with relevant government agencies and NGOs to develop a Master Plan on Victim Assistance for 2007-2011, which was finalized in December 2005. It is a comprehensive document comprising all aspects involving assistance to landmine survivors, starting from the initial stage, medical treatment, physical rehabilitation, vocational training, social and economic reintegration, and rights of disabled persons. This Master Plan will serve as the basis for all agencies working on victim assistance. It will also provide the guidelines for them to develop their separate work plans and projects to fulfill their objectives in 2009. Pending approval from the National Committee on Humanitarian Mine Action, I wish to inform you that the relevant ministries and NGOs have continued to carry out their responsibilities in full awareness of the Master Plan.

In accordance with our response to the GICHD questionnaire in July 2005 on objectives for achieving our target in 2009, as appears in Annex V of the Zagreb Progress Report, I wish to note that, among the objectives in the list, the greatest accomplishment which should be mentioned today are (1) emergency and continuing medical care, (2) physical rehabilitation, and (3) psychological support and social reintegration.

With regard to emergency and continuing medical care, the Ministry of Public Health, which is the core implementing agency, is coordinating closely with central and local offices in facilitating the access of survivors to hospital, medical care and rehabilitation services. We can assure you that the hospitals and public health centres which are located in the relevant provinces and communities have sufficient capacity and facilities to provide emergency medical care and rehabilitation services, particularly essential treatment in emergency cases. The Thai Government also provides survivors with an allowance to support their necessary emergency medical treatment.

On physical rehabilitation, Thailand can assure you that landmine survivors are provided with basic support as required by the Rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities Act, enacted in 1991, including physical rehabilitation. The cost of medical care at government healthcare centres and hospitals are borne by the Government. In 2005, community based-rehabilitation programmes under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security were expanded to many provinces. Nevertheless, there are some remaining problems, such as travel cost from villages to hospitals for medical treatment and rehabilitation programmes, and insufficient supply of necessary devices. To meet these challenges, TMAC has coordinated with the Ministries and NGOs concerned, namely, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Prosthetics Foundation and other relevant NGOs to develop projects and workplans to solicit support from the public and private sectors to provide sufficient and appropriate services to landmine survivors.

As for psychological support and social reintegration, landmine survivors have access to services and care at community-level hospitals without any expense, in accordance with the above-mentioned Rehabilitation for

Persons with Disabilities Act. Landmine survivors may attend vocational rehabilitation training, jointly provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, at vocational centres in the vicinity of their villages.

In sum, as a result of Thailand's firm commitment to assist mine survivors, we have seen more and more positive outcomes. We are confident that, with increasing awareness and active participation among the relevant agencies, Thailand would be able to reach our objectives on victim assistance by the year 2009.

Co-Chairs,
Friends and colleagues,

It needs to be mentioned that both NGOs and independent charitable foundations have played a significant role in this matter. To name just a few, the Prosthetic Foundation, Handicap International, Thailand Campaign to Ban Landmines, Association of Persons with Physical Disability International (APDI) and the General Chatichai Choonhavan Foundation are among those which have consistently dedicated their efforts and worked closely with TMAC to assist mine survivors.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and TMAC, in cooperation with some NGOs jointly organized a Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action on 7 April 2006. The outcome of this event shows that, to achieve our goal to become a mine-free country with no new mine victims, we need integrated cooperation, synchronized planning, and concerted efforts from every sector of the society. In particular, we have placed an emphasis on increasing the supportive role of private enterprises as part of their contribution to society, particularly through rural development. One of TMAC's proposals submitted during that event was a project on the assistance of mine survivors.

Co-Chairs,

Thailand has always attached much importance to undertaking measures to improve the mine victim assistance process. We will continue our

utmost efforts to develop a more comprehensive partnership among all stakeholders, both domestically and internationally.

In concluding my presentation, I wish to reaffirm that Thailand believes that the “3Ps”-- partnership, participation and policy planning -- are key factors to the achievement of the goals on assisting mine survivors in Thailand.

Thank you.
