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**Statement by Cambodia on Victim Assistance
presented to the
Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration
May 26, 2009
Geneva, Switzerland**

**Delivered by Mr. Thong Vinal, Executive Director, Disability Action Council (DAC),
On behalf of Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) and
Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA)**

Co-Chairs, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to convey my sincere thanks for the opportunity to update you on progress in Cambodia in the area of assistance to persons with disabilities, including mine survivors. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation – MoSVY – is the key ministry with responsibility for disability issues in Cambodia.

Cambodia has been making slow but substantial progress in ensuring that the institutional framework is strengthened to properly respond to the needs and rights of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

Cambodia is working on its report on the status of victim assistance as requested by the Co-Chairs. This report will include details of achievements since 2005 but now I will briefly update you on some of the most significant progress since our last report to the 9MSP.

Cambodia's legislation on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has already been approved by the Council of Ministers and has been put on the agenda of the National Assembly for adoption by the end of May 2009.

The National Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities, including Landmine/ERW Survivors was signed by the Co-chairs of the Landmine Victim Assistant Steering Committee, MoSVY and CMAA, on 10 April. The last meeting of the Steering Committee on 6th May agreed to establish a National Disability Coordination Committee to coordinate, monitor, evaluate and promote the implementation of the National Plan of Action and other key issues of the disability sector. His Excellency Minister of MoSVY will be the chairperson of NDCC with co-vice chairs being the Secretary General of CMAA and Secretary of State of MoSVY. The members will be from relevant ministries, such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Public Work and Transportation, and other key actors in the disability sector including the Cambodian Disabled Persons Organisation and the National Centre of Disabled Persons. The Disability Action Council will be the secretariat. The National Plan of Action and the National Disability Coordination

Committee will be formally determined by Government Decision. The documents have been submitted to the Prime Minister for adoption.

MoSVY, with the support of AusAID, is in the process of recruiting a disability advisor to strengthen the capacity of the ministry to address its responsibility for disability issues in Cambodia.

CMAA and Cambodian Red Cross signed a Memorandum of Understanding on April 07, for the period of 2009 to 2012 with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of the Cambodian Mine Victim Information System (CMVIS) to respond to the needs of mine action operators, and service providers supporting victim assistance activities.

With the support of non governmental service providers, programs for persons with disabilities have been widely and fruitfully implemented in Cambodia but we also have many challenges.

- There are seven Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in Cambodia for persons with disabilities. The centres are operated and financed by NGOs in collaboration with MoSVY. Current centres are not responsive enough to the needs of persons with disabilities in whole country.
- Inaccessibility to public buildings, public transport, facilities and referral systems is still a major barrier that prevents persons with disabilities in actively participating in social and economic activities.
- The national budget allocation for the disability sector in Cambodia is still low so collaboration between the national and international community is very important in providing for the sector.
- State structures lack human resources and technical and financial capacity to fully respond to the needs of the disability sector.
- Disability statistics are not reliable and need to be improved for better service provision.
- Mainstreaming of persons with disabilities into the existing programs and services is still limited so there is a need for greater attention and care by the Royal Government of Cambodia to promote inclusion.

One of the priorities of the Royal Government of Cambodia, and in particular MoSVY, is to support the implementation and monitoring of the National Plan of Action. The plan is an important step in achieving the goal of more effective and coherent service provision for persons with disabilities, including landmine and other ERW survivors, their families, and affected communities.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners who have been providing generous support to the disability sector since the very beginning and I would also like to appeal for your continued support to persons with disabilities including landmine/ERW survivors in Cambodia.

Thank you