

*This speech will be delivered in the Thai Language*

**Remarks**  
**by**  
**H.E. Mr. Issara Somchai,**  
**Minister of the Ministry of Social Development and**  
**Human Security**  
**at**  
**The Second Review Conference 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**  
**Cartagena, Colombia,**  
**3 December 2009**

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**Madame President,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Distinguished Representatives,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I am deeply honoured to participate in this important meeting on behalf of the Kingdom of Thailand. At the outset, I wish to commend the Colombian Government and the Colombian people for their excellent arrangements and hospitality.
2. Since we became a State Party to the Convention ten years ago we have endeavoured to clear all our mines, to destroy our mine stockpiles, to provide much-needed assistance to our victims, and to promote universal acceptance of the Convention.
3. It is timely that today also marks the International Day for Persons with Disabilities. We view that the ultimate goal of the Mine Ban Convention is in fact to promote human security. To this end, Thailand has adopted a

comprehensive approach to victim assistance, setting this issue within the broader national framework of protecting persons with disabilities, including through our Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act enacted in 2007. In addition, we give particular importance to the participation of people at the grass roots with a view to strengthening the local community in providing assistance to mine survivors.

4. Not only do we provide treatment, rehabilitation, care, and support for landmine victims, but we also promote mine risk education as a preventive measure. But our ten-year experience also laid bare the obstacles and challenges we have to overcome if we are to fulfill our obligations completely – obstacles and challenges that Thailand alone cannot overcome.

#### **Distinguished Representatives,**

5. We are here to review the progress we have made and address challenges ahead. One of those challenges is that of mobilizing sufficient resources or effective functioning of the Convention. As you all know, mine clearance is not only dangerous but also costly and time consuming. We thus urge those States Parties in a position to do so, to render greater help and cooperation to those less capable.

6. Developing countries are the very countries directly suffering from the terrible effects of landmines and without both financial and technical aid from the developed world, the people of these countries will continue to suffer and perish.

7. International cooperation and assistance under Article 6 must therefore be fully acted upon. But in these gloomy times of recession, Thailand is fearful that

funds will dwindle, aid will dry up, and the developing world left to fend for itself.

8. We must therefore ensure that Article 6 is continuously operational, that there is a constant supply of funds and resources to help those countries in need meet their humanitarian obligations.

9. On Thailand's part, we stand ready to share our substantial experience and know-how on victim assistance with other countries that may be lacking capacity in this field. Our doctors and healthcare services are second to none.

10. Our emergency medical services system and physical rehabilitation services are extensively available in all provinces, including in local communities. All our landmine survivors could get prosthetics for free at their local hospitals as well as from the mobile units which provide regular services at various local communities. We have also extended our assistance in prosthetics to survivors in neighbouring countries.

11. Our 'Mine Victim Survey and Situation Analysis Project' has helped in ascertaining and assessing the progress of victim assistance in Thailand so we are better aware of what remains to be done. These are just examples of experiences and best practices that Thailand is prepared to share and exchange with our friends and partners.

12. Furthermore, as a Co-Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, we welcome the extensive exchanges of views and experiences on Victim Assistance that has transpired during this Second Review Conference.

**Distinguished Representatives,**

13. It is clear that not all countries face the same problems and have the same circumstances. To an important extent, each country's problems are unique and the remedies to address them must be tailor made.

14. That is why strengthening the ISU is very important so that it can act to 'match' the specific needs of a country with the specific assistance another country is able to provide.

15. We also propose that we reassess the yardstick for success due to the different circumstances each country is under. Some countries have numerous amounts of landmines laid in difficult and hostile terrain to clear, especially within the standardised ten-year deadline.

16. As we look into the future for the next five years, Thailand believes that another challenge facing all of us is non-compliance. However, Thailand believes that future non-compliance may not be intentional violation of the Convention. In fact, it is likely that we will find ourselves in situations where non-compliance will be closely linked to the limitation of States Parties' capacity or lack of resources. Therefore, we welcome the proposal to set up a standing committee on resource mobilisation in order to address this issue and hope that this initiative will be given positive recommendation.

**Distinguished Representatives,**

17. In conclusion, the ultimate aim of the Convention is not only humanitarian but practical. We seek to clear and release land so that they are safe enough for people to work on and benefit by. In the long run, a mine-free world means

greater economic and development opportunities and better well-being for its inhabitants.

18. This is what we must work to achieve. The Road to Cartagena has been a long and difficult one. We must work together to ensure that our journey was not made in vain and that our road towards the Third Review Conference less arduous.

Thank you.

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