



STATEMENT OF CAMBODIA ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF APMBT

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 8-9 JUNE, 2018

Mr. Chair,

First, on behalf of Cambodian delegation I would like to express my gratitude and congratulate to the Switzerland, Netherland, Chile, and Colombia for the tireless efforts you have given as the Committee on Article 5 Implementation.

Poverty reduction is one of the main development goal of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). However, landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) hold back development efforts and has killed and maimed thousands of people and caused suffering for Cambodia. Mines/ERW have caused an unacceptable number of casualties with a total of 64,688 casualties from 1979 to 2017. Until now, together with our partners we have effectively responded to the humanitarian and development imperatives by reducing number of casualty and returning hundreds of thousands of hectares of contaminated land to communities. Those included the release of **1,711 km²** of contaminated land for productive use, found and destroyed **1,051,105 of AP mine, 24,662 of AT Mines and 2,729,371 ERWs** for the last 25 years.

As a result, the annual number of mine/ERW casualties has been brought down from 4,320 in 1996 to 58 in 2017 and 28 casualties during the first five month of 2018. Although there has been a substantial reduction in casualties; the current number is still too high. The Cambodia Government and the development partners acknowledge the significant progress has been achieved in tackling mines/ERW problem but the present of mines and ERW threat is still one of the main obstacle for development. According to the baseline survey on the first 124 districts completed in 2013, the magnitude of the contamination is still quite extensive. Up to present, around 1,970 km² of land is still suspected of contamination under which 944 km² is landmine contaminated and 1026 km² is contaminated of ERW. Thus, Cambodia's extension request under article 5 implementation to eliminate APM contamination by 2019 is out of reach.

During the first extension request period from 2010 to 2017, Cambodia was able to release/cleared around 477 km² of mined area over the target set in the first extension work plan of 470 km², found and destroyed **188,902 AP mines, 4,696 AT mines and 811,881 ERW.**

In line with the Cambodia endorsement of the “Maputo + 15 Declaration” with the ambition to intensify efforts to complete clearance to the fullest extent possible by 2025, an independent review of the Mine Action Sector in Cambodia in 2016 recommended that the Cambodia mine action sector need to fine-tune and develop a new and well informed strategic plan to guide the future directions for Cambodia’s humanitarian mine action program. In this regard, the RGC decided to establish a new National Mine Action Strategy, NMAS 2018-2025, which was founded upon experience through lesson learned, momentum of the present and optimism of future cooperation.

The Strategy aims to achieve a vision “***Cambodia is mine free and the threat of explosive remnants of war is minimized, and human and socio-economic development takes place safely***”. It outlines how Cambodia will address its mine/ERW problem, specifically releasing all known APM areas by 2025, and preparing to address residual threats after the deadline. In carrying out this mission, eight strategic goals have been set together with 27 objectives, and their 64 respective strategies.

The most landmine contaminated areas are identified to be along the Thai-Cambodian border. Due to the fast growing economies in the region, the greater demining effort will be required to provide more safe land in a very short time to the growing population and expansion of the community, thus this lead to higher risk of mines/ERW accidente too. Therefore, the Cambodia and Thai Governments have established an official mechanism through dialogue and cooperation with well-defined objectives to remove landmines and build an economic community along the border.

Mr. Chair;

Mine action sector in Cambodia has reached a turning point where the transition from more international to more domestic funding. This will see a gradual withdrawal of funding from international sources and gradually replaced by domestic ones by 2025. This would require improving coordination efforts in the planning and prioritization process so that scarce resources are best used, enhancing land release methodology, clearance tools and techniques, undertaking continuous surveys and most importantly to secure adequate funding. To achieve this strategic work plan, around **USD 406 million** will be needed to complete the jobs.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is absolutely committed as member of state parties to comply with all the provisions of the Convention by ensuring the total clearance of all known APM areas in Cambodia by 2025. Cambodia would like to thank all the donors for the continued support to mine action in Cambodia such as Switzerland, Japan, UK, UNDP, Norway, Australia, the United State of America, Canada, Netherlands, and others. We also welcomes the emerging donor such as China for the recent contribution into the mine action sector in Cambodia. This job will not be completed without the support from all the stakeholders including development partners, operators, national and sub national authorities involved.

Finally Cambodia would also like to take this opportunity to extend our profound gratitude to the APMBC/ISU and state parties as well as other development partners for the continuous support to Cambodia's mine action.

I thank you Mr. Chair!