

GICHD remarks on APMC Article 5 extension request submitted by the Kingdom of Cambodia

Intersessional Meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
WMO Building, Geneva, 22 May 2019

The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) have clearly been working hard to provide as accurate a picture as possible of the remaining AP mine contamination which requires clearance.

The Cambodian government is evidently aware that the release of over 890 square kilometers of contamination, whether through; cancelation, reduction or clearance represents a significant undertaking, and it is commendable that Cambodia has elected to increase state resources going into mine clearance through the domestic deployment of clearance teams from the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF).

The release of all AP contaminated areas in Cambodia by 2025 is an ambitious target. To realize its goal the mine action sector, under the direction of the CMAA, will need to; nearly double its current capacity, sustain support for this increase over the five year extension period, and strive to maintain operational efficiency. Such an increase in capacity may be difficult to implement quickly, but may also present an opportunity to achieve some of the targets laid out in the Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan developed by CMAA. Even by realizing its plans to deploy an additional 2000 field staff seconded from RCAF Cambodia is likely to find it challenging to release, over the next five years, a similar amount of land as has been achieved to date.

CMAA are aware that external support will need to be increased, and are taking positive steps by launching initiatives such as addressing a backlog in data entry into the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), and initiating its 'Mine Free Village' policy. These efforts should significantly reduce the number of Suspected Hazardous Areas recorded on the national database, thereby allowing donors and partners to closely monitor the tangible progress being made as the country moves towards 2025.

The GICHD would like to reaffirm its commitment to supporting Cambodia in its path to completion.