

Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies (25 and 26 June)

8. Other items (including Mine Risk Education and Mine Action Technology Development)

At present, Japan is conducting research and development into relevant technologies aimed at improving the safety and efficiency of mine clearance activities, as well as procuring mine clearance materials. I would like to mention the progress of our efforts in this area since the 8th MSP.

(1) Certification Trials in Cambodia

While making use of our technological capabilities, Japan has been making active efforts to research and develop mine detection and clearance equipment, in order to improve the safety and efficiency of mine clearance activities. At the 8th MSP, we reported that it was decided in September last year to conduct final operational trials of a Japanese made mine clearance machine in an actual minefield. This machine has now been introduced into the affected area and staff training has been completed. From April this year to September, we plan to implement operational trials. After these trials, Japan plans to give the certified machines to the Cambodian Government for their mine clearance activities.

(2) Certification trials in Croatia

Since 2002, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) has been advancing its research and development of mine detection machines, and conducting verification tests in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Croatia. Presently, approval has been received from the Croatian Government, and quality control testing is underway of the Tohoku University developed, handheld Advanced Landmine Imaging System (ALIS). The JST research and development project was concluded at the end of last fiscal year, but Tohoku University's independent research continues. Quality control testing re-scans practice minefields after each clearance run has been completed and then undertakes an assessment of the landmine clearance operation.