

Intervention on Victim Assistance
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Thailand

Mr. President,

Thailand is committed to assisting landmine survivors and to ensuring that they receive medical care and are fully reintegrated into society with dignity. Victim assistance is an area in which we are proud of our expertise and success. We have put tremendous efforts in strengthening our national capacity to assist the unfortunate fellows regardless of their nationalities. Our records have substantiated this statement. I would therefore focus on our ongoing activities and future plans.

Thailand is currently drafting the Master Plan on Victim Assistance 2012-2016 to accommodate the National Mine Action Strategy and the Cartagena Action Plan. The Sub-committee on Victim Assistance has organized a series of brainstorming session to develop this master plan and to translate it into comprehensive and practical action plans both at the national and local levels. Participants in such forum are key stakeholders from both governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as landmine survivors to ensure that activities and measures will be undertaken with efficiency. Most importantly, the survivors' needs will be fulfilled.

In our plan, we envisage that all victims will receive medical treatment and care, have good quality of life and able to live their lives contentedly. To achieve our vision, five strategic plans encompassing all victim assistance key elements are set. They are (1) the systemization and management of victim's national database, (2) the provision of medical treatment together with the physical and mental rehabilitation, (3) the assistance for economic and social reintegration including vocational training, (4) the enhancement of participation of people with disabilities, networking and community base rehabilitation, and (5) knowledge base management and international cooperation

As for mine survivors, prosthetic limbs are essential for their daily living and working. The Royal Thai Government has placed emphasis on the sufficient provision of prostheses, assistive devices and downstream services. To complement the distribution of prostheses, Thailand Mine Action Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health has established the centre for the repair and the change of the artificial sole. Two centres in Sakaew province are launched as a pilot project in

November. The authorities concerned also organized a training course for volunteers who are amputees themselves, to fix the damaged or broken prosthetic legs and soles. The trainees can later provide the repair service for others living in and nearby communities. This project will help facilitate mine survivors particularly those who live in remote areas.

Let me continue a bit further on the issue of prostheses. On 19 October this year, the Royal Thai Government also presented the Prosthesis Producing Equipments to the Government of Burundi with an aim to provide an increasing opportunity for Burundians to have affordable prostheses as well as to promote the technological and expertise transfer in the framework of South-South Cooperation.

Mr. President,

The emergency response simulation in most mine-affected areas has been conducted on regular basis with an aim to formulate a unified response plan after the landmine incident till the safe transfer of victim for immediate medical care. Most recently, was exercised in Sakaew and Nan provinces

The Community-Based Rehabilitation programmes countrywide have been to a certain extent successful. A number of participants, volunteers and the self-help groups have been satisfactorily on the rise. Members of the community and families have shown their increasing interests to learn and to help rehabilitate people with disabilities. In 2008, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security established the first Community Learning Center to transfer knowledge and experience that help facilitate the integration of people with disabilities into communities as well as the improvement of physical and mental rehabilitation. To date, there are 42 centres in 21 provinces including most mine-affected provinces. In 2011, 20 centres in 10 more provinces are in the pipeline.

Mr. President,

The main challenge in victim assistance is the long-term monitoring and follow-up of survivors. Without the accurate and up-to-date database, the assistance cannot reach all survivors. Realizing this problem, Thailand Mine Action Centre, with assistance from the Norwegian People's Aid and the UNDP, has developed the national database on landmine survivors. This is now in progress and will be completed within 6 months. This database is based on and developed from the national registration of people with disabilities and the survey carried out by the Handicap International in 2008. At the moment, 786 out of over 1,200 landmine survivors have already registered

and recorded in our database. The authorities concerned have collectively commissioned their provincial offices to trace the missing ones who had previously registered to ensure that the short-term and long-term assistance will reach them. Those who registered will also receive a monthly disability allowance of 500 baht for their personal expenses on top of other assistance and services provided by the Government under relevant Acts and Ministerial Regulations.

Mr. President,

I would like to reiterate that, over the years, Thailand has developed greater awareness and fostered closer coordination among government agencies, civil society, and private entities to enhance our capacity to address this agenda. Although Thailand has never spared our efforts to assist landmine victims, there is still room for us to do more. Therefore, Thailand is eager to learn from other states' successful experience in this matter. At the same time, we also stand ready to share with other states our decade-long experiences and lessons learned if they will be of help to relieve sufferings inflicted by landmines.

Thank you
