



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
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STATEMENT OF CAMBODIA ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE
19 MSP TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION
Virtual from The Hague City, The Netherlands, 15-19 Nov 2021

H.E. Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to express my sincere thanks for inviting us to share the progress made by Cambodia in its efforts to fulfill its commitments to assist mine/ERW victims as agreed upon in the Oslo Action Plan. I would also like to congratulate Thailand, Sweden, Algeria, and Ecuador for their achievements as the Committee on Victim Assistance.

Excellency Chair, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Cambodia is affected by mines and explosive remnants of war left by 32 years of conflict that ended in the 1990s. With determined efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia and with assistance from the United Nations and the international community, Cambodia began its humanitarian mine action program in 1992.

The CMAA, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, plays its roles to strengthen coordination, to mobilize resources and technical assistance to support the Mine/ERW survivors and their families. Through this mechanism, relevant government ministries, subnational authorities, NGOs and the private sector actively participate in victim assistance activities. Those activities include the provision of the emergency assistance and medical care to victims, medium to long term physical rehabilitation, vocational training, job placement, psychological and socio-economic support, and addressing the rights and need of the persons with disabilities (for instance, through raising awareness about the services to victims, survivors and their families).

H.E. Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Cambodian Mine Victim Information System (CMVIS) recorded almost 65,000 mine/ERW casualties from 1979 to 2020. In 2020 alone, 65 mine/ERW casualties were recorded, including 42 men, 16 boys, 4 women, and 3 girls.

Cambodia's commitments to improve the quality of life of mine/ERW survivors and persons with disabilities have been underscored by its formulation and execution of legal and operational frameworks. These include the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Disability Strategy Plan 2019-2023, the National Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023, the Sustainable Development Goals 18th, and the National Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025.

Through the CMAA coordination mechanism: relevant government ministries, subnational authorities, NGOs and the private sector actively participated in increasing available victim assistance support services across the continuum of care. We have seen improved and enhanced provision of emergency assistance to victims through emergency response and medical treatment, long-term physical rehabilitation, psychological and socio-economic support, vocational training, job placement, and occupational therapy. Other efforts include improving referral pathways and disseminating service and rights information to victims, survivors, their families and relevant stakeholders.

H.E. Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year, 3,673 persons with disabilities have been contacted, including the quality of life survey (QLS). Among them were 423 mine/ERW survivors living in 282 villages across the country.

In addition, 11 physical rehabilitation centers, 1 spinal cord injury center, and 3 repair workshops distributed 18,198 prosthetic and orthotic products, including 9,993 assistive devices and 2,340 walking aids. Local authorities were also encouraged to collect disaggregated data on persons with disabilities.

Concurrently, Cambodia organized various forums on disabilities to disseminate the law on protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, guidelines, and other related policies. And social and economic inclusion barriers were tackled by physical rehabilitation centers, CMAA, and relevant stakeholders through localized sporting events, primary and secondary school referrals, skills training, job placements and small grants.

H.E. Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite these achievements, Cambodia still faces many challenges regarding under-resourcing in emergency support and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation services, physiotherapy, vocational training skills and community services. Moreover, capacity and cooperation of VA stakeholders in data reporting remains a pressing issue. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to call for technical and financial assistance from all development partners so that together we can overcome these challenges and ensure that all members of our community can live with dignity and equality.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all development partners, especially the Implementation Support Unit of this convention, Australia, Canada, Exceed Worldwide, Humanity & Inclusion, ICRC, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Sir Bobby Charlton Foundation (SBC), UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, and VIC, and those whom might not be named here, for their invaluable collaboration and contribution to Cambodia in undertaking its obligations to mine/ERW survivors and other persons with disabilities.

Thank you.