

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION (Belgium, Norway, Sri Lanka and Zambia (Chair))

Intersessional Meetings
22 – 24 June 2021

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5 BY CAMBODIA

I. Progress in implementation (OAP Action #8, #22)

1. Cambodia reported that in 2020 it released 590 hazardous areas measuring 77,325,162 square metres, including 13,456,263 square metres cancelled, 17,450,872 square metres reduced and 46,418,072 square metres cleared, destroying in the process 10,085 anti-personnel mines and 23,466 other items of explosive ordnance. Cambodia also reported that it had completed its baseline survey in 2020.
2. The Committee observed that the information provided by Cambodia on progress in implementation allowed for comparability with that provided in its 2019 extension request. The Committee welcomed Cambodia providing disaggregated information on progress in accordance with land release methodology employed, using the Guide to Reporting and in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) (Action #8, Action #22).

II. Clarity regarding remaining challenge (OAP Action #18, #22)

3. The Committee observed that Cambodia reported clarity¹ concerning its remaining challenge (Action #18). Cambodia reported a remaining challenge of 8,923 suspected hazardous areas measuring 801,641,652 square metres located in 24 Provinces.
4. Action #22 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States to report in a manner consistent with IMAS by providing information on the remaining challenges, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size, as well as by type of contamination. The Committee observed that while Cambodia had in 2020 indicated that, "Confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) are not stored in the national database but in the database of its implementing partners". **The Committee observed that Cambodia had not provide information its Article 7 Report on its remaining challenge in a manner consistent with the IMAS by providing information disaggregated by suspected hazardous areas and confirmed hazardous areas (Action #22).**
5. Action #18 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States that have not yet done so will identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, and establish evidence based, accurate baselines of contamination based on information collected from all relevant sources, no later than by the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021. The Committee observed that while

¹ "Clarity" has been used when a State Party has provided a summary table of all remaining areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines according to regions, provinces and districts including the number of areas known to contain anti-personnel mines, the number of areas suspected to contain anti-personnel and the size of the areas.

Cambodia had reported completion of its baseline survey and that this forms part of Cambodia's efforts to identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, in an effort to establish an evidence-based, accurate baseline of contamination **The Committee observed that Cambodia was still in the process of identifying the precise perimeter of mined areas and would welcome updated information from Cambodia on these efforts** (Action #18).

6. The Committee observed that Cambodia had provided updated information on its efforts to establish their baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men (Action #18).
7. The Committee welcomed Cambodia reporting remaining challenges in a manner consistent with IMAS, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size (Action #22).

III. National plans for clearance and survey (OAP Actions #1, #2, #3, #19, #20, #26)

8. Cambodia reported having a National Mine Action Strategy (NMAS 2018-2025) in place for the period (2018-2025) (Action #2). The Committee recalled that Cambodia's extension request submitted in 2019 contained a national evidence based and costed plan for clearance and survey which projects the release of 109.6 million square meters annually for the period 2021-2025 (Action #19).
9. The Committee recalled that Cambodia's 2019 extension request included reference to the Cambodia specific sustainable development goal #18 on mines/ERW. The Committee observed that in 2020 the Government of Cambodia allocated an annual financial commitment towards implementation of US \$250,000. The Committee further noted that Cambodia had reported on financial contributions from its implementing partners and donors during the reporting period (Action #1).
10. The Committee observed that Cambodia had reported on its efforts to strengthen partnerships and integrate responses between mine action related activities and humanitarian response plans, peacebuilding, development or human rights plans, where relevant (Action #6).
11. Action #20 of the Oslo Action Plan requests States to annually update their national work plans based on new evidence and report on adjusted milestones. **The Committee observed that Cambodia had not provided information its Article 7 Report on updated adjusted milestones based on new evidence, (e.g. the results of baseline survey) including information on the number of areas and the amount of mined areas to be addressed annually and would welcome further information in this regard (Action #20).**
12. The Committee recalled that Cambodia's national strategy includes goal #8 to, 'Ensure mine action activities are supported by enhanced quality management system, effective information management, and are gender and environment protection sensitive on gender'. The Committee further noted that the goal is supported by the Cambodian Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (GMAP 2018-2022). Cambodia reported that the NMAS 2018-2025 was developed in close consultation with mine action operators, mine action partners, relevant government ministries, provincial authority (Provincial Mine Action Committee and Mine Action Planning Units (MAPU) who were presenting the affected communities) and opinions from the development partners were taken into consideration to ensure meaningful participatory process and practicality of the contents. Cambodia also reported that mine action stakeholders, including representatives of affected were taken into consideration to ensure to ensure practicality, transparency, and accountability in the planning process, with priority minefields discussed and prioritized by the

affected communities themselves under the coordination and facilitation of the MAPU and participation to ensure that mine clearance addresses the needs and priorities of the affected communities (Action #3).

13. Cambodia reported that it will review the legal, institutional, and operational framework, strategy and capacity needs to address residual threats after the completion of Article 5 obligations (Action #26).

IV. Efficient and expedient implementation (OAP Actions #5, #9, #27)

14. Cambodia reported on its efforts to ensure that its National Mine Action Standards reflect the latest methodologies in line with (IMAS) including review of National Mine Action Standards on, “Information Management” and “Accreditation of Demining Organization and Licensing of operation” (Action #5).
15. Cambodia reported on its efforts to maintain an accurate and up-to-date information management system. In this regard, Cambodia indicated that in 2020 it established a data management unit and that data managed by the Unit is comprehensive and up to date. Cambodia further reported the move towards online platforms (Action #9).
16. Cambodia reported on its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey, including the engagement of UNDP and NPA to conduct non-technical survey as part of the Clearing for Results Project (Action #27).

V. Actions in accordance with plans in extension requests and decisions on them

17. In considering Cambodia’s 2019 extension request, the Fourth Review Conference requested Cambodia to submit updated information on several matters. The Committee welcomes the information provided by Cambodia on:
- Annual progress and results of baseline survey activities, progress on implementation in a manner consistent with IMAS, efforts to mitigate the impact of anti-personnel mines through mine risk education and reduction efforts as well as on resources made available to support implementation efforts, and updates regarding the structure of Cambodia’s mine action program, including existing and new organisational and institutional capacities to respond to residual contamination following completion.
18. The Committee would welcome updated information from Cambodia on the following decisions of the Fourth Review Conference:
- Progress made in implementation of the planned agreement between the Cambodia and Thailand General Border Committee regarding plans to address anti-personnel contamination in border areas;
 - Updates regarding the deployment of 2,000 deminers by the Cambodian Armed Forces, with respect to gender balance in survey and clearance teams, timeline for recruitment, training and deployment;
 - The progress and results of baseline survey in the remaining 73 districts, disaggregated in a manner consistent with the IMAS and their impact on annual targets as given in Cambodia’s work plan.

VI. Mine risk education and reduction (OAP Actions #28-32)

19. Cambodia reported in detail on the actions it has taken to effectively exclude the population from mined areas, including mine risk education and reduction programmes (MRE/R) the methodologies used, challenges faced and results achieved disaggregated by gender and age (Action #32).
20. Cambodia reported that MRE/R are integrated into ongoing survey, clearance and victim assistance activities and the school curriculum to Grade 8 (Action #28). Cambodia further reported that in 2020 an evaluation of MRE in Cambodia for the period 2013-2019 was undertaken by UNICEF. The evaluation used a participatory process including consultation with all key MRE stakeholders, with recommendations of the report informing review of current National Mine Action Standards on MRE that will serve as a reference for the planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of MRE programmes. Cambodia further reported that in 2020 the Cambodian Mine Action Standard (CMAS) on MRE was amended. Cambodia further reported that it collaborated with the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) on an Integrated Approach to EORE for ASEAN Member States (Action #29).
21. Cambodia reported that MRE/R programmes target high risk groups and high-risk areas through the identification of priority villages based on casualty data, contamination data, population and experience of explosive ordnance risk education operators. The Committee observed that while that these activities were part of Cambodia's efforts to prioritise people most at risk. Cambodia had not reported on its efforts to establish an evidence-based priority-setting mechanism for MRE/R programmes (Action #30).
22. Cambodia highlighted the different partners that support MRE activities in Cambodia including national capacities: Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC), National Police, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces, Mines and ERW Clearance (NPMEC), Cambodian Red Cross (CRC), Cambodian mine/ERW victim information system (CMVIS); International Non-Government Organisations: HALO Trust, Mine Advisory Group (MAG); and, National Non-Government Organisations: Spirit of Soccer (SOS), Cambodian Self Help Demining (CSHD) (Action #31).

VII. Challenges in implementation (OAP Action #8)

23. The Committee observed that Cambodia provided quality information on challenges in implementation of Article 5 obligations, including the impacts of COVID-19 on MRE/R including; reduction of face to face delivery of EORE, reduction in discussion events, inter alia, revision of Cambodia Mine Action Standards (CMAS) and limited discussion of Standard Definitions of Beneficiaries, EORE operators still unable to report through IMSMA, decreasing financial support to EORE, and difficulty accessing target groups, for example, people who are foraging in the forest are difficult to reach because they leave home in the early morning and return home late in the evening.
24. Other challenges in implementation reported by Cambodia include, the use of IMSMA Core presents a technical challenge that includes design, implementation, and troubleshooting, and challenges related to Cambodia's targets to achieve a mine-free Cambodia by 2025, including total amount of financial resources estimated to be USD 225 million, and recruitment of 2,100 additional deminers from the RCAF, and the need for improved land release methods.