



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation Religion King

**STATEMENT OF CAMBODIA ON ENHANCEMENT OF
COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE
TWENTIETH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE
BAN CONVENTION
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA (UNOG), Switzerland
On 21-25 Nov 2022**

Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, Cambodia wishes to thank the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for their able leadership to strengthen partnerships among the States Parties.

Despite of its own struggle with landmines, Cambodia never takes it for granted when it comes to its contribution to address the problem of landmines in other countries. Since 2006, Cambodia deployed over 8,302 Cambodian peacekeepers – including 580 women – to UN peacekeeping operations in 9 countries. For only the first half of this year, 800 Cambodian peacekeepers have been deployed in South Sudan, Lebanon, Central Africa Republic and Mali.

Moreover, the Cambodian mine action community have broadly shared our knowledge, experience and skills with other mine action programmes globally. We have hosted study visits, conducted trainings and made presentations in various mine action events in 2022. For instance, in May and June this year, Cambodia provided a series of training courses to participants from Ministry of National Defense of Colombia with quality management and operational standards. Also, a Technical Working Group Meeting was organized in Cambodia by ARMAC to enhance regional cooperation and resource mobilization in ASEAN region.

Having seen these capacity development activities as the assistance that Cambodia can give to other States Parties, Cambodia will roll out its South-South Cooperation Mechanism next year. The activities will be hosted in Cambodia with the priority to benefit the landmine-affected countries in ASEAN region.

Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 1992, States Parties and other international donor countries have contributed nearly 500 million US dollars to the mine action sector in Cambodia. In addition, the Royal Government of Cambodia has also spent nearly 200 million US dollars for the sector. These concerted efforts led to the release of more than 2,498 square kilometres of contaminated land for peace building, risk reduction, housing, agriculture, infrastructure and other socio-economic development activities.

The good news is Cambodia has seen the increasing participation of the private sector through the recently established High-Level Dialogue on Mine Action, co-chaired by the CMAA and Australia, and the launch of Mine-Free Village Mechanism, which provides for a stronger linkage between demining work and subsequent rural development initiatives. Here are some concrete outcomes:

- The America Chamber of Commerce in Phnom Penh signed a MoU earlier this year to support Prey Veng province mine free in May.
- The Khmer Times media company signed an MoU with us in April to support a mine free village in Kampong Speu province.
- The Malaysia Business Chamber of Cambodia undertook a fundraising event in July and raised funds to support two mine free villages in Kampong Speu province.
- We also signed MoUs with the European Chamber of Commerce, the International Business Chamber of Commerce and the Manhattan Special Economic Zone organization to support Cambodia to mobilize more resources for landmine clearance.
- A historic event for mine action in Cambodia took place on 1st July 2022, on National Fish Day when Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen appealed to the private sector to support the acceleration of landmine clearance as Cambodia strives to meet its targets ahead of the 2025 deadline to clear all emplaced anti-personnel landmines. Some 20 million US dollars has been raised via the Prime Minister's initiative, which is not a small amount.

As all who follow the Cambodian mine action scene closely, including and especially our partners the demining operators know full well, our fight against landmines has not finished. For the remaining period of Cambodia's 2nd extension request, from October 2022 to 2025, Cambodia has plans to release 674 km² of landmine areas. We need 168 million US dollars. On an annual basis, we need about 50 million US dollars, about 150% of the fund we received annually in the last 4 years. From 2018 to 2021, we received 122 million dollars against a request for 219 million dollars and cleared 289 km² against a plan to clear 440 km². This means that with 60% of the money we expected to receive for the last 4 years, we achieved 66% of landmine clearance target. While we are looking for ways to maintain this operational tempo, at the same time ensuring that our deminers work with utmost care, there are challenges to doing so, including terrain and un-demarcated border challenges.

Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Cambodia's mine action sector plan remains under-funded which threatens our ability to fulfil our Article 5 clearance obligation. We thank our donors: Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, UNDP, UNICEF and Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining; for their continuing support and call on our past donors: Canada, Denmark, France, the European Union, Netherlands and Sweden and any would be donors to engage or reengage with us as we strive to achieve our aims as laid out in the 2020-2025 plan.

Let there be no doubt that the national commitment is there, only this week Cambodia held a national conference to commemorate 30 years of mine action in Cambodia. The conference was presided over by Samdech Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and participated by over 1,500 people. Its purpose was to underscore the collective achievements and capabilities in mine action of the Royal Government of Cambodia, states parties providing assistance, other development partners, operators and stakeholders. Let's treasure these efforts with our consolidated commitments to achieve a mine-free Cambodia by 2025.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia to all states parties and donors who supported and continue supporting mine action in Cambodia.

Thank you