

No. 52101/86



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND  
GENEVA**

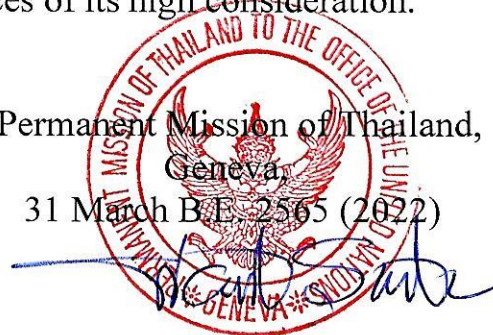
The Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (APMBC) Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and has the honour to forward herewith the Kingdom of Thailand's request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

In this connection, the Permanent Mission of Thailand has further the honour to inform APMBC ISU that the contact person for this issue and other issues pertaining to the APMBC is Mr. Patawee TREEKARUNSAWAD, Counsellor, Tel. +41 76 253 74 75.

The Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction Implementation Support Unit the assurances of its high consideration.

Permanent Mission of Thailand,  
Geneva

31 March B.E. 2565 (2022)



Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer  
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction Implementation Support Unit,  
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs,  
GENEVA.



**Kingdom of Thailand**

**Request for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of  
anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 1  
of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer  
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Submitted to the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation**

**Date 30 March 2022**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Mine contaminated areas in Thailand were predominantly Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) such as landmines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) from two main causes (1) Cambodia's internal conflicts, which spilled over the borders to Thailand in the 1970s to early 1990s, and (2) the Communist Insurgency Conflicts (1965 – 1981), which resulted in landmines contamination along the Thai – Malaysian and Thai – Myanmar borders. Although the conflicts ceased several decades ago, landmines and UXO remain silently underground.

Shortly after ratifying the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in 1998, Thailand established the Thailand Mine Action Centre (TMAC) to spearhead mine action in the country. Thailand's efforts to fulfill the obligations under the Convention have been carried out jointly by TMAC and other relevant agencies. Non-Government Organisations, including the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), the Thai Civilian Deminers Association (TDA), and the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF) which also operate in Thailand under the supervision of TMAC.

Eventhough Thailand's mine clearance efforts have been relatively successful during the second extension period (2018 – present) with only 36,968,469 square metres (or 1.45 per cent of the total initial estimated landmine contaminated areas) left to be cleared at the time of writing (1 March 2022), however, Thailand has been facing even greater challenges during the final phase that have impeded its mine action operations. Therefore, Thailand has to request the third extension of deadline for mine clearance under Article 5 of the Convention for a period of 3 years and 2 months, until 31 December 2026.

### **II. PROGRESS MADE DURING THE SECOND EXTENSION (2018 – PRESENT)**

At the beginning of Thailand's mine action efforts, the total estimated landmine contaminated areas covered 2,556,700,000 square metres in 27 provinces. At the time of submission of Thailand's first extension request, a total of 2,028,350,000 square metres had been declared mine-free. At the end of the initial operational period in 2009, Thailand was left with 528,350,000 square metres of mine contaminated areas to be cleared.

During the first extension, Thailand shifted the methodology from heavy reliance on Traditional Methods (TS), namely physical clearance, towards the evidence-based approach of Land Release (LR) along with other approaches, such as community participation and integration of cooperation among national agencies and enhancing international cooperation. At the end of Thailand's first extension in November 2018, the total areas to be cleared went down to 360,001,368 square metres. Even though significant progress had been made during the first extension, challenges remained in the mine action operations in Thailand. As a result, Thailand was granted the second extension.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand has successfully released 2,519,731,531 square metres of safe land back to its people. Thailand is left with 36,968,469 square metres of mine contaminated areas (comprising 2,988,878 square metres of Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs), 19,665,722 square metres of Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs) and 14,313,869 square metres of Areas to be Demarcated (ADs), which account for 1.45 per cent of the total contaminated areas under the initial Landmine Impact Survey. This progress has been made possible by strengthening of operations in the following areas:

## 1. EXECUTION OF THE FIVE-YEAR WORK PLAN

After Thailand was granted its second extension, Thailand has developed a Five-Year Work Plan as a roadmap to meet its clearance obligations. The Updated Work Plan submitted to the Committee on Article 5 on 30 April 2019 comprises two phases. Phase 1 of the Updated Work Plan (2019 to 2020) focused on conducting the NTS to obtain precise information on mine contaminated areas, which would enable Thailand to effectively release contaminated areas. Phase 2 (2021 to 2023)'s focus is on Technical Survey (TS) and Clearance, based on information obtained from NTS.

At the end of Phase 1 of the Five-Year Work Plan, Thailand was able to release 299,202,605 square metres of safe land back to its people, which accounted for 111% of the planned goal. Consequently, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son Provinces in Northern Thailand, Chumphon Province in Southern Thailand, and Chanthaburi Province in Eastern Thailand have become mine-free. Thailand was able to recover and destroy a total of 15,558 mines and UXO, comprising 14,707 anti-personnel mines, 168 anti-vehicle mines, and 683 UXO.

During Phase 2 of the Five-Year Work Plan, the focus has shifted towards TS and Clearance in CHAs identified in Phase 1. During this phase, together with Cambodia, Thailand also carried out the "Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia" during March - April 2020. The project was a cooperation between TMAC and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC). As a result, Thailand was able to release additional 95,000 square metres of mine contaminated areas in Sa Kaeo Province.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand has released 323,032,899 square metres during the second extension alone, and is left with 36,968,469 square metres of mine contaminated areas left to be cleared.

Provided that access to all mine contaminated areas is not an obstacle, TMAC expects to be able to release all mine contaminated areas by the end of the second extension (31 October 2023). However, since the issues of access to the ADs is still ongoing, TMAC has assessed and concluded that a third extension request is therefore necessary for Thailand to fulfill its Article 5 obligations.

<b>Total Progress made since the initial Land Impact Survey</b>	
<b>Period/Year</b>	<b>Remaining Mine Contaminated Areas in Thailand (sqm)</b>
Initial Landmine Impact Survey	2,556,700,000
End of the initial operation period (2008)	528,350,000
End of the first extension (2018)	360,001,368
Present (1 March 2022)	36,968,469

<b>Mines and UXO recovered during the Second Extension</b>			
Year	Anti-personnel mines	Anti-vehicle mines	UXO
2019	5,352	25	329
2020	9,355	143	354
2021	19,002	3	878
Jan – Feb 2022	6,305	114	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,014</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>1,689</b>

## **2. COMMITMENT TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

During the second extension, Thailand has been strengthening its efforts towards the improvement of Information Management (IM) in order to allow demining operations to become more efficient in terms of time and resources. This includes enhancing the capacity of TMAC's IM team, the IM systems (including utilising internal Cloud system and Arc GIS), and standardisation of the processes for obtaining information, in order to enable TMAC policy-makers to take fact-based, accurate, and timely decisions based on accurate information and the operational teams to function based on promptly available and precise information for their survey and clearance operations.

## **3. COMMITMENT TOWARDS FUNDING BY THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT**

During the second extension, albeit amid the COVID-19 pandemic and economic slowdown, Thailand has continued to provide the primary source of funding for the humanitarian mine operations in Thailand. The overall spending for the cost of mine action operations from 2018 to the current fiscal year (2022) is THB 1,247,434,210 (approx. USD 38,251,946<sup>1</sup>). During this period, Thailand has invested in necessary equipment for the successful operations at the total cost of THB 2,969,952 (approx. USD 91,072).

## **4. STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AT ALL LEVELS**

Since early 2000s, Thailand has been working closely with the governments and non-government organisations. Although the majority of the fund for humanitarian mine action operations in Thailand is provided by the Royal Thai Government, Thailand continues to collaborate with Governments of Japan, Norway, and the United States, which also extend support to Thailand in its humanitarian mine action operations including through support of funding, equipment, and training during the second extension.

Thailand has approached the end of the final period of mine clearance, with remaining areas of mine clearance primarily located along the border. During the second extension, Thailand has successfully released all mine contaminated areas along the Thailand – Myanmar border. While some mine contaminated areas along Thailand – Lao PDR border remain (as of 1 March 2022), Thailand believes that the release will be completed by the end of the second extension.

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<sup>1</sup> USD = THB 32.611 (Bank of Thailand's exchange rate as of 1 March 2022)

The areas along the border between Thailand and Cambodia, which cover the majority of the mine-contaminated areas, have posed a great challenge during the final stage. Thailand has been cooperating with Cambodia through bilateral mechanisms including the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC) and Thailand – Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC), as well as the “Pilot Project” mentioned above.

## **5. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

During the second extension, Thailand also works towards building strong relations with the primary land users in affected areas, the local population, and the local authorities from provincial level to the sub-district level. Such efforts towards community engagement help support the operations at all stages, as they allow TMAC to gather more precise information from the local authorities and population. Strong community engagement is also important to Mine Risk Education (MRE) efforts, as it helps raise awareness of the hazards of mines in the areas.

## **6. COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF STOCKPILED ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES**

By 2003, 4 years after the Convention entered into force for Thailand, Thailand had destroyed 337,725 anti-personnel mines in its stockpile, fulfilling its obligations under Article 4 of the Convention. Only a small number of mines had been retained to be used for the purpose of the research and training, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention.

During the second extension, in 2019, Thailand destroyed all 3,133 retained mines left for the purpose of research and training. Therefore, Thailand no longer has live anti-personnel mines in its possession. The disposal of retained mines in 2019 showed a strong commitment from Thailand towards mine action and the spirit of the Convention.

## **7. STRONG COMMITMENT TOWARDS MINE RISK EDUCATION AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE**

Thailand has a strong commitment towards Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA) and believes that these activities play an important role in reducing the humanitarian impact of landmines on the people.

During the second extension, 422 MRE activities were conducted in Thailand with 69,938 participants. The number has declined during the last two years as a result of the COVID – 19 pandemic restrictions, although necessary MRE activities are still carried out in the seriously affected areas.

During this period, Thailand also continues to place high importance on VA. Thailand joined the VA Committee under the framework of the Convention in 2020 – 2021. In 2021, Thailand was appointed the Chair of the Committee. Thailand’s priorities under its chairmanship included synchronising and aligning victim assistance efforts among different treaty frameworks, outreach and expanding the participation and narrative of victim assistance.

## **III. CHALLENGES TOWARDS THE COMPLETION OF MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS**

Thailand has made significant progress in its mine action operations during the second extension by successfully releasing 323,032,899 square metres of mine contaminated areas. From 2019 to February 2022, Thailand has recovered 40,014 anti-personnel landmines, 285 anti-vehicle mines and 1,689 UXO. Such remarkable achievement and progress has been

made despite the challenges faced by its deminers, which include difficult access to the areas with high level of contamination and challenging geographical landscape, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the access to the areas along the border.

## **1. HIGH LEVEL OF CONTAMINATION AND CHALLENGING GEOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPE**

At the final stage of the demining operations, TMAC is facing areas with high level of contamination of landmines. On average, between 2020 – 2021, TMAC found 1 mine per 3.8 square metres. Furthermore, the conditions and location of mines buried under the ground has been altered through time, for example, some mines are now covered by tree roots. Such conditions mean that additional time and resources are required for the demining operations. In performing such operations, the deminers are required to exercise extra caution in order to avoid accidents. These conditions also mean that deminers are working under stressful conditions and require more time to complete the operations.

Deminers also face extreme geographical landscape, making access to the areas a great challenge. Rough terrains and dense forest, together with extreme weather occasionally had create a condition that could take the deminers days to access the mine contaminated areas on foot with necessary equipment to carry out the clearance operations. Therefore, TMAC initiated the use of air transportation to access these areas. Examples include the “Ruang Phueng” Demining Operation, which took place in 2020, where the area was covered by mountainous jungle terrain, with no phone signal, no water sources, and access to the area could only be made via air transportation.

## **2. THE COVID - 19 PANDEMIC**

From the beginning of 2020, the second year of the second extension period, to the time of writing, Thailand has been facing different waves of the COVID – 19 pandemic. For more than 2 years, the pandemic has negatively affected Thailand’s demining operations in various aspects, from travel restrictions to physical contact restrictions and limitation of human resources, as well as the reduction in financial support from international partners and NGOs. It also imposed significant challenge to the efforts to strengthen cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia on the demining operations along the border. As the pandemic hit hard and international travel restrictions are imposed, TMAC and CMAC find it difficult to pursue agendas on demining cooperation despite their success in early 2020. This is due to the fact that the preparation for the cooperation primarily requires physical presence, including the identification of the areas of cooperation.

## **3. ACCESS TO THE MINE CONTAMINATED AREAS ALONG THE BORDERS**

Most of Thailand’s SHAs and CHAs yet to be released are situated along the Thai – Cambodian border, which are currently in the process of conducting survey and demarcation of land boundary in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on the Survey and Demarcation of Land Boundary, dated 16 June 2000 (“the MOU”). The process of survey and demarcation is a complicated and technical issue that may take several years to complete.

As Thailand’s demining operations move onward, the operations have become increasingly closer to the ADs under the MOU. Since November 2020, Thai humanitarian mine action operators were on several occasions requested, including in writing, by the local Cambodian military garrisons to stop the demining operations, citing Article V of the MOU, which



stipulates that both sides “*shall not carry out any work resulting in changes of environment of the frontier zone, except that which is carried out by the Joint Technical Sub-Commission in the interest of the survey and demarcation*”. TMAC was requested to cease its operations until the required process has been concluded in accordance with the MOU.

The Agreed Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of GBC state that “*All de-mining operations along the border areas between Thailand and Cambodia shall be without prejudice to the rights of Thailand and Cambodia with regard to the land boundary under international law.*”

As of 1 March 2022, TMAC’s deminers have been requested to stop the operations in 34 operational areas covering 14,313,869 square metres.

After several unsuccessful attempts to access the areas, the TMAC decided to suspend the demining operations in the above-mentioned areas in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding. Currently, such areas in which the TMAC is unable to perform the demining operation cover 14,313,869 square metres of ADs, which account for 38.72 per cent of all the remaining areas of 36,968,469 square metres to be cleared in order to fulfill Thailand’s obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

#### **IV. WORK PLAN TOWARDS COMPLETION OF ARTICLE 5 OBLIGATIONS**

Despite challenges, Thailand remains fully committed to completing its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. Thailand intends to complete its mine clearance operations within the second extension timeframe, if situations permit. In the unfortunate case where completion within the second extension timeframe is not possible, Thailand intends to continue its efforts during the requested extension period under the following work plan:

##### **WORK PLAN FOR MINE ACTION OPERATIONS DURING THE REMAINING PERIOD OF THE SECOND EXTENSION (2022 – 2023)**

Thailand plans to expedite the process in the remaining areas left to be released, which cover 36,968,469 square metres of land (as of 1 March 2022). In 2022, Thailand plans to release 17,386,841 square metres of land, through TS and Clearance method. Thailand still expects to be able to perform mine clearance operations in some ADs by continuing its efforts to seek cooperation from its neighbouring country. In 2023, TMAC will mobilise all available resources to deal with the remaining 8,598,192 square metres of CHAs and 14,313,869 square metres of ADs. TMAC believes that the remaining 8,598,192 square metres of CHAs can be released before the end of the second extension. However, access to the 14,313,869 square metres of ADs will remain a challenge for the Thai deminers, which has led Thailand to decide to request for the third extension.

##### **THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN FOR THE REQUESTED EXTENSION PERIOD (2023 – 2026)**

The Three-Year Work Plan for the requested extension period (November 2023 – December 2026) will focus upon the 14,313,869 square metres of ADs left to be cleared along the border and the issues of access to these areas that need to be resolved. Thailand’s Three-Year Work Plan for the extended period will primarily focus on 5 areas as follows:

## 1. MINE ACTION OPERATIONS IN THE ADs

The Mine Action Operations in the ADs will be divided into 3 phases based on the difficulty in gaining access to the areas. Since the areas are yet to be demarcated under the MOU, consultations with its neighbouring country will be pre-conditions for Thailand prior to accessing these areas. The 3 phases will cover the areas as follows:

<b>Three-Year Workplan : Thailand's Annual Land Milestones Towards Completion</b>			
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Phase 1</b> <b>(Nov 2023 – Oct 2024)</b>	<b>Phase 2</b> <b>(Nov 2024 – Oct 2025)</b>	<b>Phase 3</b> <b>(Nov 2025 – Dec 2026)</b>
Size (sq.m.)	5,328,050	5,149,998	3,563,339

Since these areas are subject to land boundary survey and demarcation under the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia, access to the border areas may pose security as well as political concerns to the concerned neighbouring country. Thailand will continue to hold consultations with its neighbour under available channels in order to seek mutually agreed solutions for the remaining demining operations. In this regard, Thailand reaffirms that its humanitarian mine action operations will be carried out solely for humanitarian purposes in accordance with its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, and that such operations shall be without prejudice to the rights of both parties with regard to the land boundary under international law.

## 2. STRENGTHENING BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES ON MINE OPERATIONS

Since 2020, with the ongoing issues regarding access to the contaminated areas along the Thailand – Cambodia border, Thailand has been making efforts to strengthen the cooperation with Cambodia through different existing bilateral frameworks as well as cooperation between relevant agencies based on the success of the “Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia” carried out in March - April 2020.

### **“Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia”**

Thailand aims to use the “Pilot Project” as a catalyst for future projects to support the demining operations during the Three-Year Work Plan. In August 2021, TMAC proposed to CMAC a new project for cooperation. In response, CMAC indicated that CMAC “strongly welcomes and supports” TMAC’s initiative. Subsequently, TMAC has proposed the areas for operations, and is currently waiting for comments and suggestions from CMAC. Part of the new areas proposed by TMAC is intended to be developed into a Customs checkpoint once the mine action operations are complete. TMAC expects that the efforts will build mutual trust between the two nations, as well as will bring economic prosperity into the area, benefiting people living on both sides of the border. Once the areas of cooperation have been preliminarily agreed by TMAC and CMAC, the plan will be submitted to the GBC for endorsement.

### **Thailand - Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC)**

The GBC is a military cooperation framework dealing directly with security issues in the border areas. Thailand and Cambodia have been cooperating on humanitarian demining under this framework, in which they agreed that “*All de-mining operations along the border areas*

*between Thailand and Cambodia shall be without prejudice to the rights of Thailand and Cambodia with regard to the land boundary under international law.”*

As part of the Three-Year Work Plan, Thailand will continue to push forward the humanitarian demining cooperation under the GBC framework. The 15th Meeting of the GBC was initially set to be held on 25 February 2022 via video conference, but it is currently postponed upon the request of Cambodia to be held physically at the appropriate time in the future.

### **Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC)**

The JC is a major mechanism to promote cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia in all aspects. Previously, demining cooperation had never been incorporated under the JC framework. Thailand took the opportunity to raise the issue of humanitarian demining cooperation along the Thailand-Cambodia border areas at the 11<sup>th</sup> JC hosted by Cambodia on 16-18 December 2021. As proposed by the Thai side, the Record of Discussion of the 11th JC Meeting welcomed the successful demining cooperation between the two countries, and agreed to continue to work together to further facilitate the humanitarian demining operations in the areas along the border.

Thailand will continue to push forward its efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation on humanitarian demining operations with Cambodia through these bilateral mechanisms, and will utilise these mechanisms to resolve the issues of access to the ADs. Thailand will continue to reiterate its common understanding that the implementation of Article 5 obligations of the Treaty shall be without prejudice to the survey and demarcation of the land boundary and the rights of both sides with regard to land boundary under international law.

## **3. ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AT ALL LEVELS**

In addition to strengthening ties with the neighbouring countries, Thailand's Three-Year Work Plan also include enhancing international cooperation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. In addition to building ties and developing joint demining cooperation with the neighbouring countries, Thailand is also committed to strengthening cooperation with its international partners, including Japan, Norway, and the United States, and the non-government organisations. Innovative approaches to expedite demining operations with the involvement of third-parties in the ADs, with prior consent and following pre-established conditions set by both parties, may be considered.

### **Regional framework**

In addition to the efforts at the bilateral level, Thailand sees the benefits of strengthening the cooperation at the regional framework of ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC). Thailand's priority is to include action-oriented cooperation in mine action efforts, including more projects targeting technical assistance, international cooperation, and needs assessment, under the new Work Plan of ARMAC for 2022 - 2024.

Thailand has also made an effort to push forward the proposal to establish the Guidelines and Action Plan for mine clearance operations in ASEAN, which could be a starting point for the cooperation on mine action efforts among the ASEAN Member States, especially along the border areas. As proposed by Thailand under ARMAC, the technical working group, comprising of the NPA, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as well as the ASEAN Member States, has been established for the drafting of the documents and is scheduled to meet in May 2022. The Guidelines and Action Plan are expected to be completed by the end of 2022. With such Guidelines and Action Plan in place, Thailand aims

to work towards turning these two documents into concrete actions through the implementation of pilot projects between interested ASEAN Member States.

### **Multilateral framework**

In recent years, Thailand has played an active role under the framework of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention as a member of the Committee on Victim Assistance in 2020 – 2021, and the Chair of the Committee in 2021. Thailand has recently been appointed a member of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for the term 2022 – 2023. Thailand believes that the work of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, including the “Individualised Approach”, could potentially contribute to the success of the mine action efforts and the fulfillment of obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. Thailand believes that the “Individualised Approach” and other relevant activities will help open up venues of cooperation and assistance in support of its demining efforts along the border with Cambodia.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Cambodia has already submitted its proposal to utilise the Individualised Approach to the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. Thailand intends to engage the Cambodian side within the auspices of the Convention and seek cooperation from the Cambodian side on the possibility aligning and synchronizing mine action efforts. These can be carried out through initiatives such as pursuing “Joint Individualised Approach” or other activities dedicated to the last pocket of contamination in Thailand, within the framework of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

## **4. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Thailand will continue to strengthen community engagement in all main stages of its mine action operations, some of which in cooperation with a local non-government organisation.

Part of the efforts to build up community engagement will be carried out through the project “Vocational Training Programme(s) for Mekong Region Communities Effected from Landmine (VTMREL)” to be co-proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA) to the ASEAN Secretariat for the funding from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund. The project aims towards reducing poverty and risks from landmines/UXO, including by promoting income opportunities in the communities previously affected by landmines and using it as a sustainable development model for other ASEAN Member States in the Mekong region communities (Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Thailand).

## **5. CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE UNCLEARED AREAS**

Thailand is endeavoured towards completing its Three-Year Work Plan by releasing all mine contaminated areas by the end of the requested period. While these areas are yet to be cleared, Contingency Plan for the Uncleared Areas will be put in place. This comprises the following:

- **Putting up signs to warn the locals and visitors of the mine contamination.** The signs will be made in different languages including Thai, English and the language of the neighbouring country to which the areas are adjacent.
- **Continued Emphasis on Mine Risk Education.** Warning signs will be coupled with emphasis on MRE especially for the locals and wanderers.

- **Establish safe patrol lanes.** Safe patrol lanes will be established for both sides to conduct joint patrol to help prevent wanderers from accidentally entering the contaminated areas.
- **Continued Commitment towards Victim Assistance.** Commitment towards VA will be continued as part of the Contingency Plan in case an accident occurs in the contaminated areas.
- **Commitment towards Dialogues with the Neighbouring Countries.** Efforts will be made by Thailand to continue dialogues with the neighbouring countries to resolve the issues in ADs.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

As one of the earliest States Parties to the Convention, Thailand ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction on 27 November 1998. The Convention entered into force for Thailand on 1 May 1999.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand has successfully released 2,519,731,531 square metres of mine contaminated areas, and is left 36,968,469 square metres (comprising 2,988,878 square metres of Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHAs), 19,665,722 square metres of Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs) and 14,313,869 square metres of Areas to be Demarcated (ADs)), equivalent to 1.45 per cent of the total landmine contaminated areas of 2,556,700,000 square metres under the initial Land Impact Survey in 2001.

## **ORIGINS OF THE ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGE**

When Thailand first joined the Convention, mine contaminated areas in Thailand were predominantly Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) such as landmines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) from two main causes (1) Cambodia's internal conflicts, which spilled over the borders to Thailand in the 1970s to early 1990s, and (2) the Communist Insurgency Conflicts (1965 – 1981), which resulted in landmines along the Thai – Malaysian and Thai – Myanmar borders. Although these conflicts ceased several decades ago, landmines and UXO remain silently underground, waiting to cause indiscriminate harm to people and also hamper developmental prospects for social and economic development in the areas concerned. Thailand is fully aware that these mines pose serious threats to humanity. Therefore, as part of the international community, Thailand fully commits itself to the efforts to eliminate these inhumane weapons at the earliest opportunity.

## **EFFORTS TO FULFILL ARTICLE 5 OBLIGATIONS**

With the support of the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Thailand started conducting the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) from May 2000 to June 2001. The survey reported a total landmine contaminated area of 2,556,700,000 square metres, containing 933 mine and UXO contaminated sites, impacting 530 communities (69 of which being severely impacted) in 27 of Thailand's 76 provinces, and affecting a total of 503,682 persons. The most seriously affected areas were along the border with Cambodia.

### **Establishment of the National Mine Action Committee (NMAC)**

To demonstrate the resolve of the Royal Thai Government in fulfilling its obligations under the Convention, shortly after ratifying the Convention, the Royal Thai Government established the National Mine Action Committee (NMAC), comprising all concerned Ministries and Departments, to provide policy guidance and to monitor the implementation of the obligations set forth by the Convention.

Recently, the NMAC's structure and mandate have been revised in order to respond more effectively to the change in nature of Thailand's mine action operations in its efforts to fulfill

the obligations under the Convention to the utmost efficiency. The Prime Minister's Order No.126/2560 of 18 May B.E. 2560 (2017) duly established the new National Mine Action Committee. The new NMAC is comprised of representatives from various government agencies, and chaired by the Prime Minister himself, with the Director of Joint Operation of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters (RTARF HQ) as the Secretary of the Committee, and the Director-General of the Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Director General of Thailand Mine Action Center of the RTARF HQ; representative from the Ministry of Public Health; and a representative from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior, as Assistant Secretaries of the Committee.

Functions and Responsibilities of the new NMAC include providing policy directives and guidelines for the humanitarian mine action operations and the implementation of Thailand's obligations under the Convention, as well as approving the activities to be conducted by the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC), which has been given a mandate as the leading agency for the implementation of humanitarian mine action in Thailand. The Committee regularly reports directly to the Prime Minister.

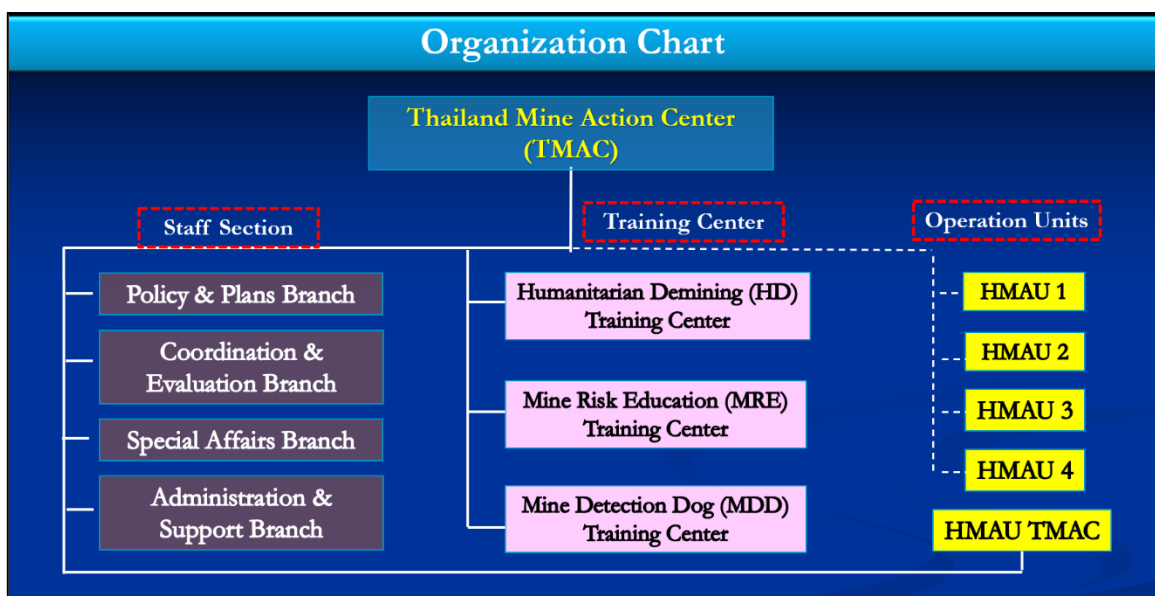
### **The Establishment of the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC)**

The Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) was subsequently established by NMAC in January 1999 and placed it under the supervision of the Supreme Command Headquarters of the Ministry of Defense (currently known as "The Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters") as the leading agency for the implementation of humanitarian mine action in Thailand, which includes *inter alia* mine clearance, promoting mine risk awareness, and victim assistance. TMAC Director General is the commanding general of the unit.

TMAC has the responsibility to plan, administer, coordinate, and conduct all tasks related to humanitarian mine actions to ensure full compliance with the Convention, as well as all other matters related to mine and UXOs clearance. TMAC acts as a coordination centre between relevant government agencies, and supervises and controls mine clearance and disposal operations in the field, which are carried out by Humanitarian Mine Action Units. TMAC is also responsible for the implementation of Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA), as well as environmental remediation. In addition, TMAC also provides HMAU operational and training support for other affected nations under the framework of the Convention.

TMAC's structure has developed and evolved throughout the mine action efforts in Thailand, allowing more efficient working methods to be implemented during the second extension. The current TMAC's structure comprises 5 operational units: HMAU 1, HMAU 2, HMAU 3, HMAU 4, and HMAU TMAC, working in different locations, and resulting in more efficient clearance progress especially during the final stage of the mine action operations as access to the areas has increasingly become a challenge. These HMAUs can also be promptly relocated to another location as situation requires.

### Structure of the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC)



#### **From Early Years of Mine Action to the Latest Development**

During the early years of Thailand's demining efforts, the country relied heavily on Traditional Methods (TS), namely physical clearance. Such techniques were later deemed to be time and resource consuming if not done in combination with other techniques, since all the areas suspected to be contaminated had to be inspected by the deminers regardless of the accuracy of evidence that they were real hazardous areas or not.

Since 2007 – 2008, TMAC introduced Locating Minefield Procedure (LMP) as a new method in its arsenal. LMP yielded very positive results and was the beginning of Non-Technical Survey (NTS) in Thailand. From 2011 onwards, NTS became an internationally adopted method, which later evolved into Land Release (LR) method. The collection of information allowed Thailand to determine whether the areas should be inspected by the deminers or to be cancelled. As a result, NTS and LR allowed Thailand to cancel enormous amounts of suspected areas with confidence in a shorter time, without the need for total reliance on physical inspection. NTS and LR activities in Thailand include a few short site visits, meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, and reassessment of military and historical records. TMAC has worked in cooperation with various counterparts, including local communities in collecting and reassessing essential information in order to make informed decisions on clearance and LR.

Since the implementation of the new methods, Thailand has made significant progress in its mine action operations, but several obstacles still remain in its efforts and determination to become a mine-free country. Due to various challenges under different circumstances, Thailand had to request for the first extension of deadline under Article 5 of the Convention for 9 years and 6 months (from 1 May 2009 until 1 November 2018), and subsequently, second extension for another 5 years until 31 October 2023.



### **The Request for an Extension of the Deadline**

Even though Thailand's mine clearance efforts have been relatively successful during the second extension period with only 36,968,469 square metres (or 1.45 per cent of the total initial estimated landmine contaminated areas) left to be cleared at the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand has been facing even greater challenges during the final phase that have impeded its mine action operations. Therefore, Thailand has to request for the third extension of the deadline for mine clearance under Article 5 of the Convention for a period of 3 years and 2 months until 31 December 2026.

## **II. NATURE AND EXTENT OF PROGRESS MADE**

### **THE BEGINNING OF THAILAND'S MINE ACTION OPERATION UNTIL THE FIRST EXTENTION (2001 – 2009)**

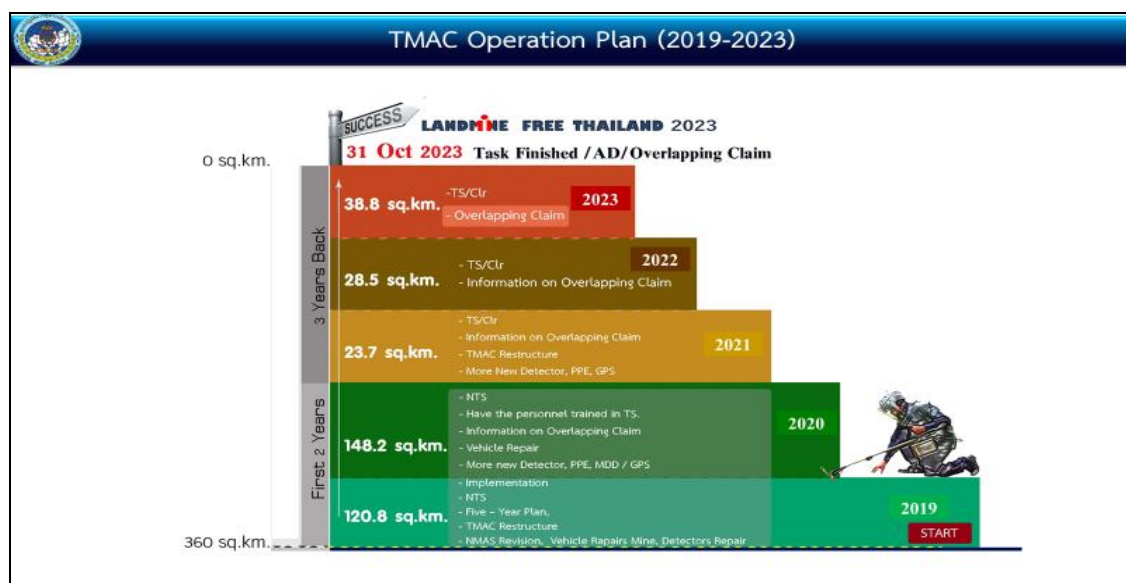
At the beginning of Thailand's mine action efforts, the total estimated landmine contaminated areas covered 2,556,700,000 square metres in 27 provinces. At the time of submission of Thailand's first extension request in 2008, a total of 2,028,350,000 square metres had been declared mine-free. At the end of the initial operational period in 2009, Thailand was left with 528,350,000 square metres of mine contaminated areas, covering 18 provinces, to be cleared.

### **PROGRESS MADE DURING THE FIRST EXTENTION (2009 – 2018)**

During the first extension, Thailand shifted the methodology from heavy reliance on Traditional Methods (TS), namely physical clearance, towards an evidence-based approach of Land Release (LR) along with other approaches, such as community participation and integration of cooperation among national agencies and enhancing international cooperation.

In 2016, TMAC and NPA have also collaborated on a pilot project to resurvey the suspected contaminated areas considered to be grossly overestimated by the initial Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) conducted in early 2000s. The results of the project indicated that many areas suspected to be contaminated are in fact mine-free.

As a result of all these efforts, by the end of the first extension in November 2018, Thailand was able to release 168,348,632 square metres of mine contaminated areas, bringing the number of total areas left to be cleared down to 360,001,368 square metres in 11 provinces. Despite the significant progress made during the first extension, challenges remained for the mine action operations in Thailand. As a result, Thailand was granted the second extension.



**The Five-Year Work Plan as in the Updated Work Plan submitted to the Committee on Article 5 in 2019**

## **PROGRESS MADE DURING THE SECOND EXTENSION (2018 – PRESENT)**

During the second extension period, Thailand has made significant progress in fulfilling its Article 5 obligations. From the beginning of the second extension to the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand has successfully released 323,032,899 square metres of land, and is left with 36,968,469 square metres of mine contaminated areas (comprising 2,988,878 square metres of SHAs, 19,665,722 square metres of CHAs and 14,313,869 square metres of ADs). The remaining areas account for 1.45 per cent of the total estimated mine contaminated areas under the initial Landmine Impact Survey. This progress has been made possible by strengthening of operations in the following areas:

### **1. EXECUTION OF THE FIVE-YEAR WORK PLAN**

After Thailand was granted its second extension, Thailand has developed a Five-Year Work Plan as a roadmap to meet its clearance obligations. The Updated Work Plan submitted to the Committee on Article 5 on 30 April 2019 comprises two phases. Phase 1 of the Updated Work Plan (2019 to 2020) focused on conducting the NTS to obtain precise information on mine contaminated areas, which would enable Thailand to effectively release contaminated areas. Phase 2 (2021 to 2023)'s focus is on Technical Survey (TS) and Clearance, based on information obtained from NTS.

**Phase 1 of the Updated Five-Year Work Plan** covers the period of 2019 – 2020. Thailand's focus was on conducting the NTS in order to confirm and identify the extent and density of the mine contaminated areas, including the areas along the border which fall under the category of "Areas to be Demarcated (ADs)" under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on the Survey and Demarcation of Land Boundary dated 16 June 2000 ("the MOU"). At the beginning of the implementation of Phase 1, Thailand expected to release 269,036,076 square metres of mine contaminated areas in 10 provinces.

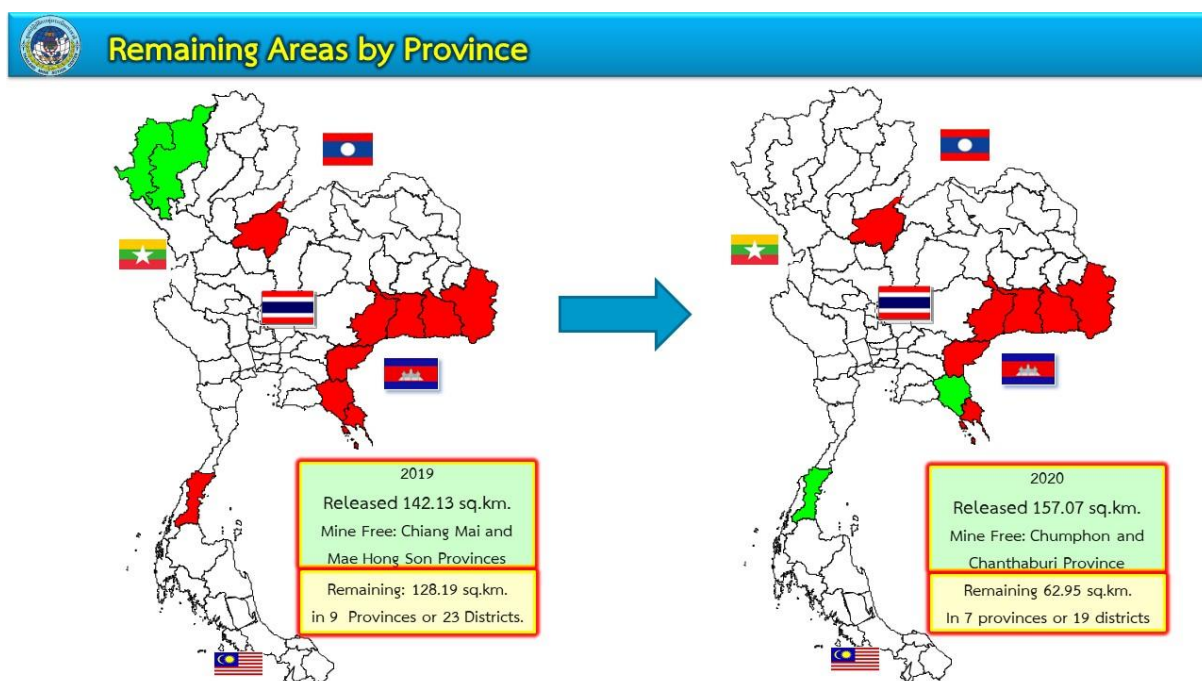
Region	Province	Area Sq.m.	Goal 2019 Sq.m.	Goal 2020 Sq.m.	Goal 2021 Sq.m.	Goal 2022 Sq.m.	Goal 2023 Sq.m.
North	Phitsanulok	28,530,520	9,510,170	9,510,170	9,510,180	Landmine Free	
	Chiang Mai	25,615,188	1,103,526	-	-	9,308,072	15,203,590
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54,145,708</b>	<b>10,613,696</b>	<b>9,510,170</b>	<b>9,510,180</b>	<b>9,308,072</b>	<b>15,203,590</b>
Northeast	Buri Ram	19,483,928	15,587,142	-	3,896,786	Landmine Free	
	Surin	27,299,749	-	21,839,800	5,459,949	Landmine Free	
	Si Sa ket	73,383,526	39,495,981	19,210,841	-	14,676,704	Landmine Free
	Ubon Ratchathani	101,227,784	21,364,937	59,617,291	-	-	20,245,556
	<b>Total</b>	<b>221,394,987</b>	<b>76,448,060</b>	<b>100,667,932</b>	<b>9,356,735</b>	<b>14,676,704</b>	<b>20,245,556</b>
East	Chanthaburi	3,936,224	3,562,113	374,111	Landmine Free		
	Sa Kaeo	7,696,798	1,724,472	1,695,254	1,669,773	1,490,174	1,117,125
	Trat	69,654,131	26,912,587	34,354,161	3,107,481	3,005,862	2,274,040
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81,287,153</b>	<b>32,199,172</b>	<b>36,423,526</b>	<b>4,777,254</b>	<b>4,496,036</b>	<b>3,391,165</b>
South	Chumphon	3,173,520	1,586,760	1,586,760	Landmine Free		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,173,520</b>	<b>1,586,760</b>	<b>1,586,760</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>360,001,368</b>	<b>120,847,688</b>	<b>148,188,388</b>	<b>23,644,169</b>	<b>28,480,812</b>	<b>38,840,311</b>

During Phase 1, the areas initially identified in the plan as a part of Chiang Mai Province was reassigned by the Ministry of Interior as part of Mae Hong Son Province, thus while not increasing the total area of contamination, the number of mine-contaminated provinces in Thailand was increased from 10 to 11.

During this phase, together with Cambodia, Thailand also carried out a “Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia” in March - April 2020. The project was a cooperation between TMAC and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), which took place following the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Thailand – Cambodia General Border Committee on 21 March 2018 and the Record of Discussion on Demining Cooperation along the Border of the Kingdom of Thailand and Cambodia on 17 September 2018. During this Pilot Project, Thailand was able to release additional 95,000 square metres of mine contaminated areas in Sa Kaeo Province.

At the end of Phase 1 of the Five-Year Work Plan in 2020, Thailand was able to release 299,202,605 square metres of safe land back to its people, which accounted for 111% of the planned goal. Thailand was able to recover and destroy the total of 15,558 mines and UXO, comprising 14,707 anti-personnel mines, 168 anti-vehicle mines, and 683 UXO. Consequently, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son Provinces in Northern Thailand, Chumphon Province in Southern Thailand, and Chanthaburi Province in Eastern Thailand have become mine-free. By the end of this phase, Thailand was left with 62,953,510 square metres, in 226 areas, covering 19 districts in 7 provinces. These areas can be categorised into 18 SHAs (25,751,859 square metres), 182 CHAs (23,276,882 square metres) and 26 ADs (13,924,769 square metres).





**Phase 2 of the Updated Five-Year Work Plan** covers the period from 2021 – 2023. During this period, the focus has shifted towards TS and Clearance in CHAs identified in Phase 1. During this phase, Thailand is expected to clear mines in the areas of 62,953,510 square metres in 7 provinces. These areas are expected to be heavily contaminated and situated in remote locations, and the large part of these areas are Areas to be Demarcated (ADs), in accordance with the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia, making access to the areas more challenging, and consequentially, necessitated adjustments to pre-approved Work Plan to accommodate changing circumstances and situations on the ground.

The plan for 2021 was to release 30,584,267 square metres of mine contaminated areas in 2 provinces, Buri Ram and Surin, through TS and Clearance method (this number was adjusted from the initial 23,144,169 square metres included in the Work Plan submitted in 2019, as TMAC expected to be able to release more areas due to an increase in capacity and expertise of the deminers). At the same time, Thailand also put its efforts in strengthening cooperation with its neighbouring country through different frameworks in order to facilitate the gaining of access to the areas along the border, especially the ADs.

Despite the multitude of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021, Thailand was able to release 23,114,663 square metres of mine contaminated areas, which accounted for 75.58% of its goal, mainly due to challenges in gaining access to the ADs. During such efforts in 2021, 19,002 anti-personnel mines, 3 anti-vehicle mines, and 878 UXOs were recovered. By the end of 2021, Thailand was left with 40,026,420 square metres, covering 18 districts in 7 provinces, namely Sa Kaeo, Trat, Buri Ram, Surin, Si Sa Ket, and Ubon Ratchathani, to be cleared. One of the main reasons for the delay of the operations, and challenge to Thailand's fulfillment of Article 5 obligations under the Convention, was attempts by local military garrison stationed next to the ADs requesting for Thai demining teams to cease the operations, citing Article V of the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia on the Survey and Demarcation of Land Boundary (see Section III below).

### **Conclusion on the Progress Made during the Second Extension**

Since the beginning of the second extension in November 2018, Thailand has released 323,032,899 square metres of mine contaminated areas. At the time of the writing (1 March 2022), Thailand is left with 36,968,469 square metres of mine contaminated areas, including 14,313,869 square metres of ADs. The operations in the 14,313,869 square metres of ADs, covering 30 areas in 6 provinces, namely Ubon Ratchathani, Si Sa Ket, Surin, Buri Ram, Sa Kaeo and Trat, have been suspended by TMAC due to the issues of access to the areas concerned.

Provided that access to all mine contaminated areas is no longer an obstacle, TMAC expects to be able to release all mine contaminated areas by the end of the second extension (31 October 2023). However, since the issues of access to the ADs is still ongoing, TMAC has assessed and concluded that a third extension request for the period of 3 years and 2 months until December 2026 is therefore necessary for Thailand to fulfill its Article 5 obligations.

### **Total number of mines and UXO recovered during the second extension**

<b>Anti-Personnel Mines, Anti-Vehicle Mines and UXO recovered during the Second Extension</b>			
Year	Anti-personnel mines	Anti-vehicle mines	UXO
2019	5,352	25	329
2020	9,355	143	354
2021	19,002	3	878
Jan – Feb 2022	6,305	114	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,014</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>1,689</b>

### **Total progress made since the initial Land Impact Survey**

<b>Period/Year</b>	<b>Remaining Mine Contaminated Areas in Thailand (sqm)</b>
Initial Landmine Impact Survey	2,556,700,000
End of the initial operation period (2008)	528,350,000
End of the first extension (2018)	360,001,368
Present (1 March 2022)	36,968,469



### Annual Progress by Province (2019 – 2021)

Year	Province	Planned Goal (sq.m.)	Actual result (sq.m.)				Total
			Clearance	Technical survey	Non – Technical survey	Pilot Project (NPA)	
2019	North	Mae Hong Son	-	-	6,513,376		6,513,376
		Chiang Mai	-	-	19,101,812		19,101,812
		Phitsanulok	-	-	3,267,516		3,267,516
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10,613,696</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,882,704</b>		<b>28,882,704</b>
	North/East	Buri Ram	-	6,316,344	10,283,323		16,599,667
		Si Sa Ket	3,220	5,627,443	41,471,791		47,102,496
		Ubon Ratchathani	-	131,977	20,234,757		20,366,734
	<b>Total</b>	<b>76,448,060</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>12,075,764</b>	<b>71,989,871</b>		<b>84,068,855</b>
	East	Sa Kaeo	65,869	697,514	414,122		1,177,505
		Trat	18,730	148,022	24,299,440		24,466,192
		Chanthaburi	-	46,206	365,676		411,882
	<b>Total</b>	<b>32,199,172</b>	<b>84,599</b>	<b>891,742</b>	<b>25,079,238</b>		<b>26,055,579</b>
	South	Chumphon	7,459	627,272	2,490,290		3,125,021
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,586,760</b>	<b>7,459</b>	<b>627,272</b>	<b>2,490,290</b>		<b>3,125,021</b>
	<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>120,847,688</b>	<b>95,278</b>	<b>13,594,778</b>	<b>128,442,103</b>		<b>142,132,159</b>

**2019: The total released areas accounted for 117.6 per cent of the plan.  
Additional 325,036 square metres of mine contaminated areas were found.**

**2020: The total released areas accounted for 105.9 per cent of the plan.  
Additional 1,829,711 square metres of mine contaminated areas were found.**

Year	Province	Planned Goal (sq.m.)	Actual result (sq.m.)				Total
			Clearance	Technical survey	Non – Technical survey	Pilot Project (NPA)	
2020	North	Phitsanulok	9,510,170	-	-	12,000,577	12,000,577
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9,510,170</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,000,577</b>		<b>12,000,577</b>
	North/East	Buri Ram	-	54,430	1,546,462	-	1,600,892
		Si Sa Ket	19,210,841	-	854,686	19,374,269	20,228,955
		Surin	21,839,800	-	174,018	19,241,069	19,415,087
		Ubon Ratchathani	59,617,291	14,551	24,933,293	49,818,562	74,766,406
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100,667,932</b>	<b>68,981</b>	<b>27,508,459</b>	<b>88,433,900</b>		<b>116,011,340</b>
	East	Sa Kaeo	1,695,254	154,991	391,648	175,190	721,829
		Trat	34,354,161	-	833,362	24,148,421	24,757,923
		Chanthaburi	374,111	645,453	112,042	2,772,783	3,530,278
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36,423,526</b>	<b>800,444</b>	<b>1,337,052</b>	<b>26,872,534</b>		<b>29,010,030</b>
	South	Chumphon	1,586,760	48,499	-	-	48,499
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,586,760</b>	<b>48,499</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>48,499</b>
	<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>148,188,388</b>	<b>917,924</b>	<b>28,845,511</b>	<b>127,307,211</b>		<b>157,070,446</b>

Year	Province	Planned Goal (sq.m.)	Actual result (sq.m.)				Total
			Clearance	Technical survey	Non – Technical survey	Pilot Project (NPA)	
2021	North	Phitsanulok	9,456,834	170	562,434	8,498,368	9,060,972
	<b>Total</b>		<b>9,456,834</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>562,434</b>	<b>8,498,368</b>	<b>9,060,972</b>
	North/East	Buri Ram	1,153,639	416,942	689,573	-	1,106,515
		Surin	4,171,523	19,275	50,656	2,968,516	3,038,447
	<b>Total</b>		<b>5,325,162</b>	<b>436,217</b>	<b>740,229</b>	<b>2,968,516</b>	<b>4,144,962</b>
	East	Sa Kaeo	1,500,165	12,578	234,854	126,188	373,620
		Trat	14,302,106	76,882	641,807	8,816,420	9,535,109
	<b>Total</b>		<b>15,802,271</b>	<b>89,460</b>	<b>876,661</b>	<b>8,942,608</b>	<b>9,908,729</b>
	<b>Annual Total</b>		<b>30,584,267</b>	<b>525,847</b>	<b>2,179,324</b>	<b>20,409,492</b>	<b>23,114,663</b>

**2021: The plan has been adjusted from the Work Plan in 2019. The total released areas accounted for 75.58 per cent of this new plan due to challenges in accessing the ADs. Additional 187,573 square metres of mine contaminated areas were found during this period.**

## 2. COMMITMENT TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IM)

During the second extension, Thailand has been strengthening its efforts towards the improvement of Information Management (IM) in order to allow demining operations to become more efficient in terms of time and resources. This includes enhancing the capacity of TMAC's IM team, the IM systems, and the processes for obtaining information in order to enable TMAC policy-makers to make fact-based, accurate, and timely decisions based on accurate and up-to-date information and the operational teams to operate based on promptly available and precise information for its survey and clearance operations.

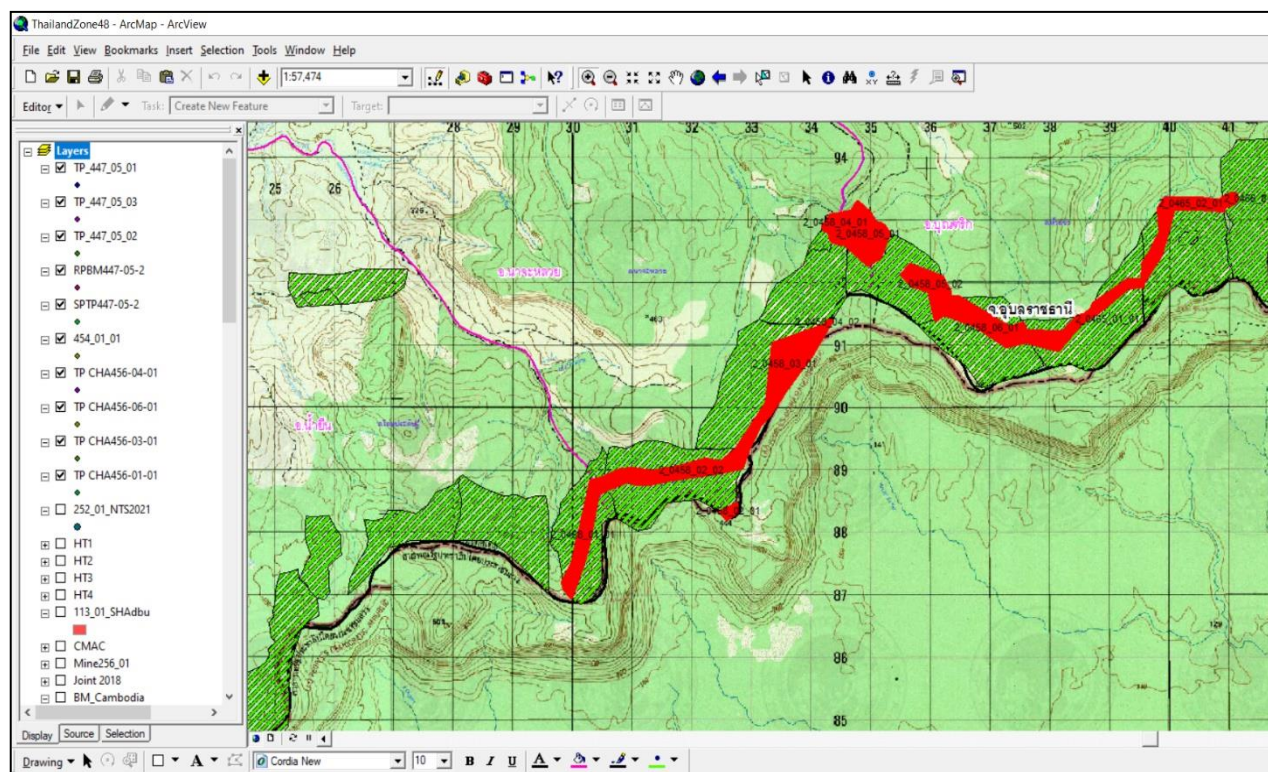
### TMAC's internal Cloud system showing information on SHAs in different mine contaminated areas

+เพิ่มข้อมูลพื้นที่ SHA									
ข้อมูลค้นหา :									
#	SHA	นปท.	ที่อยู่	จังหวัด	ขนาดพื้นที่	พื้นที่เพิ่ม	รวม พ.ท.	พ.ท. ปลดปล่อย	#
1	105-01	AD HMAU1	บ.สลอคงคอง ด.คลองน้ำใส อ.อรัญประเทศ	สระแก้ว	2,470		2,470		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
2	11-01	AD HMAU1	บ.ทัพสยาม ด.ตาพระยา อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	105,000		105,000		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
3	11-02	AD HMAU1	บ.ทัพสยาม ด.ตาพระยา อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	182,000		182,000		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
4	111-01	AD HMAU1	บ.โสนน้อย ด.ท่าข้าม อ.อรัญประเทศ	สระแก้ว	9,193	85,807	95,000		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
5	113-01	AD HMAU1	บ.ป่าไร่ ด.ป่าไร่ อ.อรัญประเทศ	สระแก้ว	2,890,174		2,890,174		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
6	119-01	AD HMAU1	บ.เนินสมบุรณ์ ด.ตาพระยา อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	1,010,700		1,010,700		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
7	139-01	AD HMAU1	บ.ทัพเสรี ด.ทัพเสด็จ อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	560,088	108,770	668,858		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
8	188-01	AD HMAU1	บ.ทับทิมสยาม 03 ด.ทัพไทย อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	56,258	15,845	72,103		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
9	188-02	AD HMAU1	บ.ทับทิมสยาม 03 ด.ทัพไทย อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	44,996	12,400	57,396		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
10	188-03	AD HMAU1	บ.ทับทิมสยาม 03 ด.ทัพไทย อ.ตาพระยา	สระแก้ว	101,600		101,600		<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>
11	198-01	AD HMAU1	บ.ทับทิมสยาม ด.คลองไกรเลื้อย อ.คลองหาด	สระแก้ว	65,000		65,000	Y	<a href="#">แก้ไข</a>

TMAC has revamped its IM system by utilising the internal Cloud, which allows all Humanitarian Mine Action Units (HMAU) under TMAC supervision to easily access the data necessary for carrying out their operations. The data contained in TMAC's internal Cloud includes details of SHAs and CHAs in different landmine contaminated areas. HMAU can search for data while on operations in remote areas using their mobile and laptop devices.



TMAC also employs Aeronautical Reconnaissance Coverage Geographic Information System (Arc GIS) to store the necessary statistics from all operations. Arc GIS contains visual displays of SHAs and CHAs landscape, which allows the policy-makers to easily view each mine-contaminated location and analyse the overall mine situation based on visual data. The system also allows the operators to effectively plan for the operations.



**ARC GIS containing visual display of data. In this picture, the red areas represent CHAs in Ubon Ratchathani Province, and the green areas represent the released or safe areas. The software allows for pre-operation planning as it shows geographical information including terrain.**

In addition, TMAC also improves its information management by standardising data collection processes to be conducted by all HMAUs. This includes standardisation of the forms and processes for obtaining necessary information of the operations, which allows the policy-makers at TMAC to make their decisions based on highly accurate information.

### **3. COMMITMENT TOWARDS FUNDING BY THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT**

During the second extension, albeit amid the COVID-19 economic slowdown, Thailand has remained committed to its demining obligations and continued to provide the primary source of funding for the humanitarian mine operations in Thailand. The overall spending for the cost of mine action operations from 2018 to the current fiscal year (2022) is THB 1,247,434,210 (approx. USD 38,251,946<sup>2</sup>). During this period, Thailand has invested in

<sup>2</sup> USD = THB 32.611 (Bank of Thailand 's exchange rate as of 1 March 2022)

necessary equipment for the successful operations at the total cost of THB 2,969,952 (approx. USD 91,072).

The budget provided by the Royal Thai Government, through the Ministry of Defense, for the funding for humanitarian operations from 2018 - 2022 is summarised in the table below:

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Personnel (THB)</b>	<b>Operations (THB)</b>	<b>Additional Fund (THB)</b>	<b>Total (THB)</b>
2018	165,513,770	72,590,000	4,860,000	242,963,770
2019	171,409,850	72,590,000	7,310,000	251,309,850
2020	171,409,850	72,590,000	9,740,000	253,739,850
2021	181,943,450	70,000,000	10,650,000	262,593,450
2022	168,957,290	65,100,000	2,770,000	236,827,290
<b>Total</b>	<b>859,234,210</b>	<b>352,870,000</b>	<b>35,330,000</b>	<b>1,247,434,210</b>

#### **Procurement of Necessary Equipment for Demining Operations**

During the second extension, the Royal Thai Government has allocated budget to TMAC for the procurement of additional equipment necessary to increase efficiency in the mine action operations, which can be summarised as follow:

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Cost (THB)</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>
1	GPS	36	450,000.00	2020
2	ALL IN ONE Computer	12	204,000.00	2020
3	Printer	6	25,800.00	2020
4	Vegetation Cutter	2	143,800.00	2020
5	Satellite Phone	6	255,552.00	2020
6	Mountain Bike	5	450,000.00	2020
7	Mountain Bike	4	460,000.00	2021
8	Drone UAV	5	154,300.00	2021
9	Radio	36	432,000.00	2021
10	Laptop Computer	15	330,000.00	2022
11	Printer	15	64,500.00	2022
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2,969,952</b>	

#### **4. STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AT ALL LEVELS**

Thailand firmly believes that international cooperation has always been an important factor for the successful implementation of the obligations under the Convention, as it helps create better mutual understanding, reconciliation, and trust among States Parties

Since becoming a State Party to the Convention, Thailand has been working closely with the governments and non-government organisations. Although the majority of the fund for humanitarian mine action operations in Thailand is provided by the Royal Thai Government, Thailand continues to collaborate with the Governments of Japan, Norway, and the United States, which also extend support to Thailand in its humanitarian mine action operations.

##### **Japan**

Japan, through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), has been extending its support to Thailand's demining efforts through the projects carried out by the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA), a local non-government organisation, which continues to provide expertise to TMAC during the demining operations.

During the second extension, JAIF has provided financial support of USD 967,753.17 to TDA under "Project to Assist Thailand in fulfilling its Clearance Obligation under the Mine Ban Treaty (PATOM)", which was carried out on May 2019 – April 2021. Thailand was able to clear the total areas of 81,166,123 square metres of SHAs/CHAs as a result of this project.

##### **Norway**

Thailand has been working with Norway since the beginning of its demining efforts in the initial Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) and has since continued its support through Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).

During the second extension, the Norwegian Government continues to support Thailand through the NPA, which helps increase capacity in survey operation and technical advisory to TMAC. In addition, the NPA also brings expertise in mine detection dogs to support Thailand's technical survey efforts.

##### **The United States**

Thailand has also been working closely with the United States in its mine action efforts, which includes various forms of cooperation, including equipment support, advice and training.

During the second extension, the United States continues to support Thailand through the US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and the Humanitarian Demining Research and Development Programme (HD R&D) by providing capacity building, including Technical Survey/Non-Technical Survey (TS/NTS) training, EOD training, and the Cobra Gold Joint/Combined Exercise: Landmine Disposal Exercise (LMD Ex), as well as equipment support.

The United States also finance Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWGF), a non-government organisation, which has signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with TMAC on 3 October 2020, allowing GWHF to assist Thailand in fulfilling its obligations

under the Convention. The MOA laid the foundation for GWHF to act as technical advisor and advocate for TMAC.

#### **Equipment support from the United States between 2018 - 2022**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Worth (THB)</b>	<b>Year</b>
1	Laptop computers	20	700,000	2018
2	Mine Detectors: MINELAB F3	50	7,000,000.00	2019
3	Visors	200	1,800,000.00	2019
4	Body Armor	200	3,300,000.00	2019
5	Mobile Bomb Cutting System	1	127,720.00	2019
6	Power Generator	1	81,045.00	2019
7	Camera System and accessories	2	83,300.00	2019
8	Drone (UAV)	1	154,300.00	2019
9	Mine Detectors : MINELAB F3	20	2,800,000.00	2021

#### **Neighbouring Countries**

As Thailand has approached the end of the final period of mine clearance, which mainly takes place in the areas along the border, the efforts to enhance cooperation with its neighbouring countries have become one of the main priorities for Thailand.

During the second extension, Thailand has successfully released all mine contaminated areas along the Thailand – Myanmar border. While some mine contaminated areas along Thailand – Lao PDR border remain (as of 1 March 2022), Thailand believes that the release will be complete by the end of the second extension.

The areas along the border between Thailand and Cambodia, which cover the majority of the mine-contaminated areas, have posed a great challenge during the final stage. Thailand has been cooperating with Cambodia through bilateral mechanisms including the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC) and Thailand – Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC), as well as the “Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia”, jointly implemented by TMAC and CMAC.

During the second extension, Thailand has also worked towards strengthening the roles of the regional framework of ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) and the multilateral framework of the Convention in assisting States Parties to the Convention to fulfill the obligations, especially in the areas along the border.

Further details regarding bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation are laid down in Section IV of this document.

## **5. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Building strong relations with the primary land users in affected areas, the local population, and the local authorities from provincial level to the sub-district level, has always been at the heart of Thailand’s mine action operations. Such efforts towards community engagement help support the operations at all stages, as they allow TMAC to gather more precise information

from the local authorities and population. During the baseline survey of mine contamination, inclusive community interviews were conducted in all areas, in which women, girls, boys and men from all residential groups, including the minority groups, were consulted. Strong community engagement is also important to Mine Risk Education (MRE) efforts, as it helps raise awareness of the hazards of mines in the areas.

During the second extension, TMAC has also received the confirmed information on the presence or non-presence of mines in the suspected areas from the locals, which is essential to the effectiveness of the operations. Local participation, especially in sub-district and village levels, has been fully incorporated into the main stages of the process of land releasing.

## **6. COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF STOCKPILED ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES**

Thailand is strongly committed to destroying anti-personnel mines in its stockpile. By April 2003, 4 years after the Convention entered into force for Thailand, Thailand had destroyed 337,725 anti-personnel mines in its stockpile, fulfilling its obligation under Article 4 of the Convention. Only small number of mines had been retained back then to be used for the purpose of research and training, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention.

In 2019, the Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters authorised the disposal of the remaining anti-personnel mines, which had been kept for the purpose of research and training. Since technologies and training aids have been developed to replace live mines, retaining live mines is no longer essential for such purposes. Therefore, Thailand had decided to destroy all of its stockpiled landmines which had been retained since 2003 for the purpose of development and training.



Between 1 – 10 August 2019, TMAC destroyed all 3,133 retained mines at Observation Hill 152, Watthana Nakhon District, Sa Kaeo Province. Therefore, Thailand no longer has live anti-personnel mines in its possession. The disposal of retained mines in 2019 showed a strong commitment from Thailand towards mine action and the spirit of the Convention.





## **7. STRONG COMMITMENT TOWARDS MINE RISK EDUCATION AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE**

Thailand has a strong commitment towards Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance (VA) and believes that these activities play an important role in reducing the humanitarian impact of landmines on the people.

### **Mine Risk Education (MRE)**

Mine Risk Education (MRE) remains one of the top priorities for Thailand in mine-related operations. Thailand has consistently conducted the MRE operations, aiming at preventing the occurrence of new victims and ensuring that people in the vicinity of mine contaminated areas understand the risks of landmines and the ways to reduce those risks. MRE activities occasionally yield the information of mined areas which greatly help with the Land Release process.

During phase 1 of the second extension (2019 – 2020), Thailand had 19 people injured and 2 deaths as a result of landmines, a significant reduction from the previous decade. Most of the victims are locals, especially hunters and rare mushroom gatherers. Therefore, the focus of Thailand's MRE operations during this period was on these vulnerable local groups.

During the second extension, MRE activities have been conducted through all available channels on 442 different occasions with 69,938 participants, including through public information campaigns, education and training, and creating networks with the local communities for the sustainability of the MRE process, with a particular focus on delivering MRE messages directly to the locals. MRE activities have been conducted at local festival events and temple fairs, Children's Day event, as well as on the International Day for Mine Awareness.

During the COVID – 19 pandemic, traditional MRE operations were mostly obstructed due to restrictions and limitation of human resources. However, TMAC has sought alternative approaches to perform MRE operations particularly in the areas heavily affected by landmines. One of the most notable approaches includes integration of MRE activities into the work of the Village Health Volunteers (VHV), who pay routine visits to households in order to perform health checks and raise COVID – 19 awareness with the locals. The VHV in heavily mine contaminated areas will be taught basic MRE information in order to also raise mine risk awareness during the visits.

Period	No. of MRE activities	Participants
Phase 1 (2019 – 2020)	315	62,389
Phase 2 (2021 – Jan 2022)	107	7549

**This table shows the statistics of MRE activities conducted in Thailand during the second extension. The slowdown in the number of activities in recent years is due to the COVID – 19 pandemic.**

As part of the MRE activities, Thailand also employs preventive measures such as posting warning signs in hazardous areas. These signs contain descriptions in various languages, mainly Thai, English, and language of the neighbouring country to which the areas are adjacent, including, Cambodian and Lao.



### **Victim Assistance (VA)**

During the second extension, Thailand also attaches great importance to another critical aspect of the Convention – Victim Assistance (VA). Thailand has adopted a holistic and integrated approach for VA, which closely correspond to the obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Services for landmine victims are integrated into the broader legal framework, national plans and programmes for persons with disabilities in general, meaning that the implementation of VA must be carried out by all relevant government agencies in line with the broader policy framework.

The first agency responsible for emergency medicine and primary care support is the National Institute for Emergency Medicine (NIEM). Via the 1669 hotline, NIEM will coordinate with hospitals in the area to ensure that mine victims can get to the nearest medical care available, which would significantly increase their survival chances. This proves to be one of the most challenging tasks since mine contaminated lands are often located in remote areas, which is an obstacle to rapid and timely on-site emergency medical services to mine victims.

In the unfortunate cases where victims become disabled, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MDHS) will provide aids and support in accordance with the Persons with Disability Empowerment Act. MDHS has been working to ensure that people with disabilities are entitled to equal opportunities and rights are protected. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture will also support mine victims to restart their livelihoods with vocational and training and agricultural incentives, such as provision of seeds and livestock. Thailand also has a universal healthcare coverage scheme since 2002. The scheme covers treatment and rehabilitation, including prosthesis for persons with disabilities and those affected by mine-related incidents.

### **VA Efforts under the Convention Framework**

Under the framework of the Convention, Thailand has consistently joined membership of the Committee on Victim Assistance. Recently, Thailand was a member of the VA Committee in 2020 – 2021. In 2021, Thailand was appointed the Chair of the Committee. Under Thailand's chairmanship, Thailand's priorities include synchronising and aligning victim assistance efforts among different treaty frameworks, outreach and expanding the participation and narrative of victim assistance, and the application of the "individualised approach" towards VA efforts.



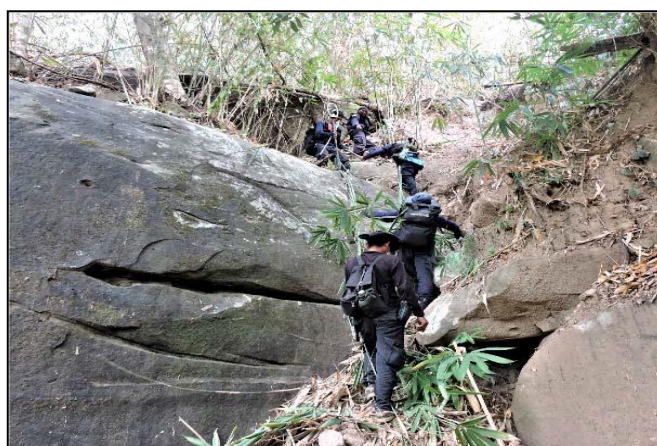


### **III. CHALLENGES TOWARDS THE COMPLETION OF MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS**

Thailand has made significant progress in its mine action operations during the second extension by successfully releasing 323,032,899 square metres of mine contaminated areas. From 2019 to February 2022, Thailand has recovered 40,014 anti-personnel landmines, 285 anti-vehicle mines and 1,689 UXO. At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Thailand is left with only 36,968,469 square metres of mine contaminated areas, including 14,313,869 square metres of ADs along the border. This remarkable achievement and progress has been made despite the challenges facing the deminers. These include access to the areas with heavy contamination and challenging geographical landscape, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the issue of accessing the areas along the border.

#### **HIGH LEVEL OF CONTAMINATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL LANDSCAPE**

At the final stage of the demining operations, TMAC is faced with heavy level of contamination of landmines. On average, between 2020 – 2021, TMAC found 1 mine per 3.8 square metres. Furthermore, the conditions and location of mines buried under the ground has been altered through time, for example, some mines are now covered by tree roots. Such conditions mean that additional time and resources are required for the demining operations. In performing such operations, the deminers are reminded to exercise extra caution in order to avoid accidents. These conditions also mean that deminers are working under stressful conditions and require more time for the performance of the operations.



**Difficult Terrain and Heavy Contamination**





**Unusual Landmine Conditions**



**Unusual Landmine Conditions: some mines are now covered by tree roots.**

In addition to heavy level of contamination and terrain changes due to transformations of natural settings and environments, deminers have to also tackle and overcome challenges arising from extreme geographical landscape, especially those that limit access to the areas of operations.

With rough terrains and dense forest, together with extreme weather condition, it could take the deminers days to access the mine contaminated areas on foot with necessary equipment to carry out the clearance operations. Therefore, the TMAC initiated the use of air transportation to access these areas.

### **“Ruang Phueng” Demining Operation**

On 16 June – 16 July 2020, Thailand undertook one of the most difficult demining operations, the “Ruang Phueng Demining Operation”. The operation took place at Ruang Phueng area in Ubon Ratchathani Province, covering 29,742,180 sq.m. of SHAs and CHAs. TMAC developed the plan led by the HMAU 3 unit to conduct these demanding demining operations along with the local non-government organisation, the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA).

This task was particularly difficult as the area has no existing route for land vehicle transportation, and is covered by mountainous jungle terrain, with no phone signal, and no water sources. TMAC decided that access





to the area had to be made via air transportation. Being aware that air transportation was costly, the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters (RTARF HQ) requested the Royal Thai Army to arrange helicopters, with the RTARF HQ bearing the additional cost. These efforts has shown Thailand's commitment towards fulfilling the obligations under the Convention at all costs.



The “Ruang Phueng” Operation in 2020 helped return 29,742,180 square metres of safe areas back to the people, with 1,722 mines and 83 UXOs recovered.

Unfortunately, extremely remote areas in Ubon Ratchathani Province still contain mines until today. Therefore, in 2022, TMAC plans to release another 9 CHAs covering 708,532 square metres, as identified by TDA. The operations in the remaining mine contaminated areas will also be very difficult due to extreme terrain and weather conditions.

### **THE COVID – 19 PANDEMIC**

From the beginning of 2020, the second year of the second extension period, to the time of writing, Thailand has been facing different waves of the COVID – 19 pandemic and different sets of challenges for its demining efforts. On top of operational challenges associated with mine actions, for more than 2 years, the pandemic has negatively affected Thailand's demining operations on various aspects, from travel restrictions, to physical contact restrictions and limitation of human resources, as well as the reduction in financial support from international partners and NGOs.

### **Direct Impact on the Operations**

Throughout the pandemic, different levels of restrictions have been put in place, which resulted in limitation of travelling and physical contact, which has directly impacted Land Release and MRE operations. For Land Release operations, the NTS require physical contact and travelling, meaning that the operational units are unable to access the areas or the community if the pandemic runs rampant. Quarantine requirements have also been put in place by the local authorities, making entry to the new areas for performing new tasks a big challenge. Furthermore, if one of the team members is tested positive, the whole unit will need to be quarantined and the operations have to be temporarily suspended. The increasing number of infection also means that TMAC faces limitation of human resources available to perform the remaining tasks.

### **Challenge towards Enhancing Cooperation along the Border**

Travel restrictions during the pandemic have also imposed significant challenge to the efforts to strengthen cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia on the demining operations along the border. As the pandemic hit hard and international travel restrictions are imposed, TMAC and CMAC find it difficult to pursue agendas on demining cooperation despite their success in early 2020. This is due to the fact that the preparation for the cooperation primarily requires physical presence, including in the identification of the areas of cooperation.

### **Reduction of Financial Aid**

The impact of the pandemic on the world's economy has also led to budget cut and reduction of financial support from the governments of TMAC's international partners. The NGOs also face difficulty in securing their budget, resulting in a decrease in financial support to TMAC's operations. Even though the demining operations in Thailand do not solely rely on financial support from its partners and the Royal Thai Government still provides the majority of funding towards the operations, such budget cut hugely affects some of the ongoing operations and the maintenance of some necessary equipment required for the performance of the operations.

### **ACCESS TO THE MINE CONTAMINATED AREAS ALONG THE BORDERS**

The mine contaminated areas in Thailand bordering Myanmar have been successfully released during the second extension. Thailand also believes that the contaminated areas bordering Lao PDR will be released by the end of the second extension. Most of Thailand's SHAs and CHAs yet to be released are, however, situated along the Thai – Cambodian border. While most of the mine contaminated areas situated near the Thai – Cambodian border has been released, partly as a result of the cooperation between the two countries, however, the “Areas to be Demarcated (ADs)” still pose challenges the Thai deminers as they are unable to access the areas to perform their demining operations.

Thailand and Cambodia are currently in the process of conducting survey and demarcation of land boundary in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on the Survey and Demarcation of Land Boundary, dated 16 June 2000 (“the MOU”). The MOU established the Thai - Cambodian Joint Commission on Demarcation for Land Boundary (“the JBC”).

At the 1st JBC meeting on 30 June - 2 July 2009, Thailand highlighted the danger of landmines to surveyors who would be involved in the survey works under the JBC. Thailand proposed that the JBC request TMAC and Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) to take joint efforts on landmine clearances in the areas to be surveyed and demarcated by the JBC after the priority of the areas had been determined. Cambodia agreed to convey such proposal to the CMAC (Paragraph 4 of Agenda Item no. 3 of the Agreed Minutes).

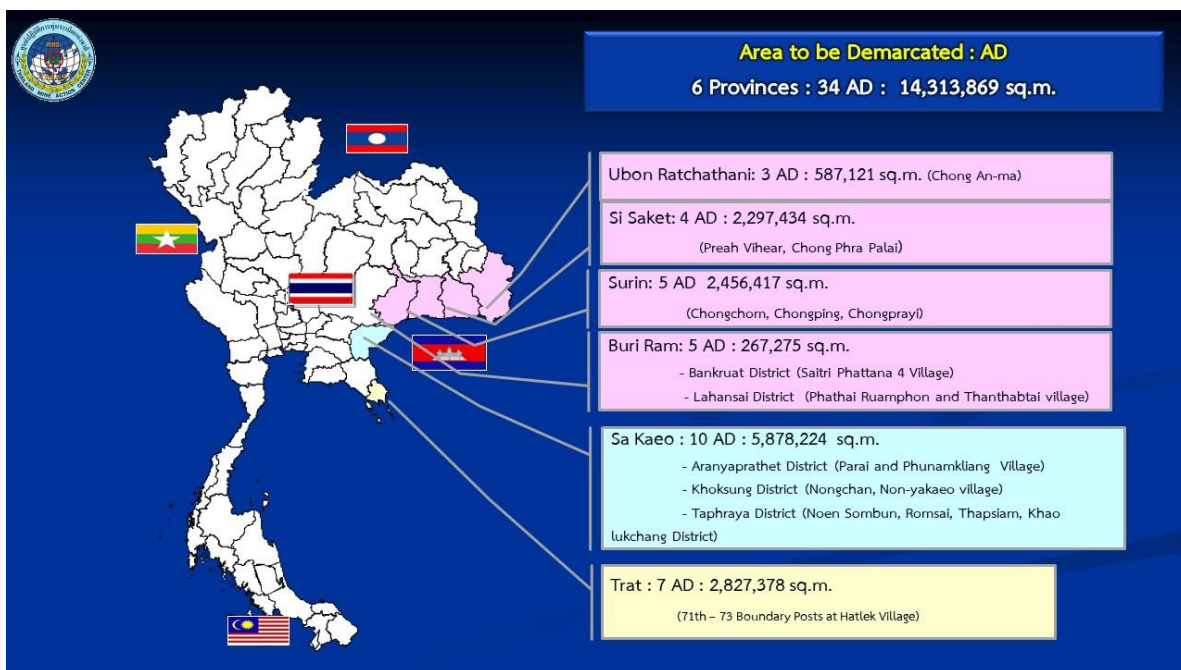
To this date, the JBC is in the process of survey and demarcation.

As Thailand's demining operations move onward, the operations have become increasingly closer to the areas to be surveyed and demarcated under the MOU. Since November 2020, Thai humanitarian mine action operators were requested on several occasions, including in writing, by the local Cambodian military garrisons to stop the demining operations, citing Article V of the MOU, which stipulates that *"To facilitate the effective survey along the entire stretch of the common land boundary, authorities of either Government and their agents shall not carry out any work resulting in changes of environment of the frontier zone, except that which is carried out by the Joint Technical Sub-Commission in the interest of the survey and demarcation"*. TMAC was requested to cease its operations until the required process has been concluded in accordance with the MOU.

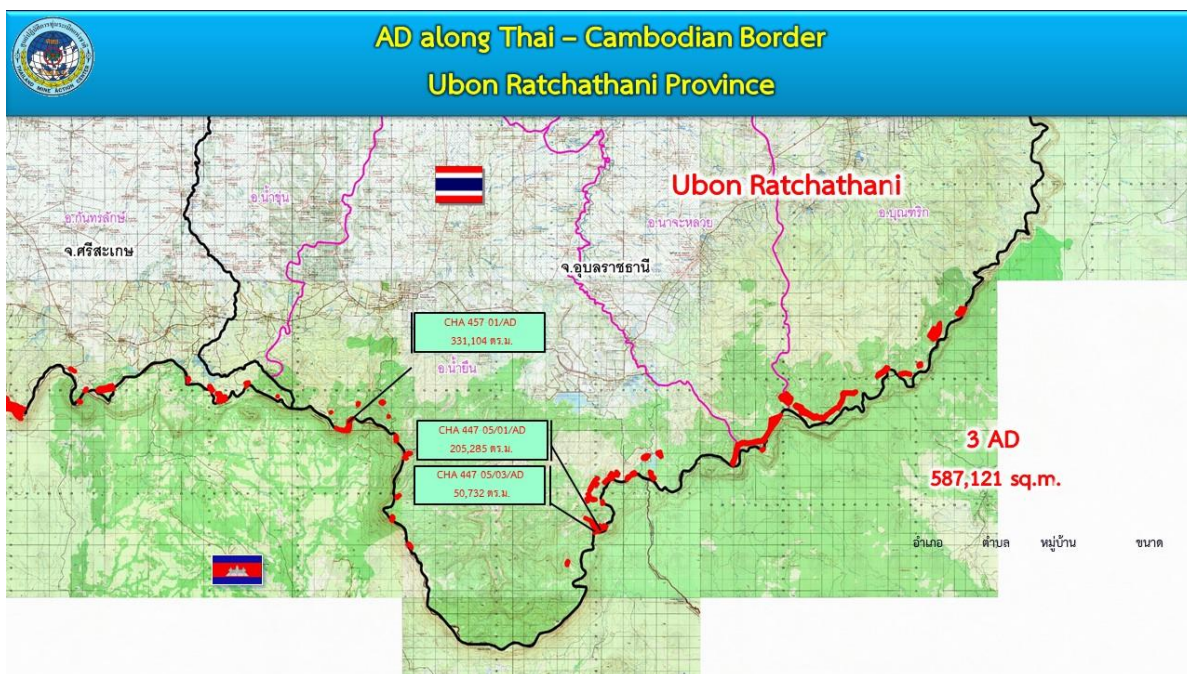
The Agreed Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of GBC, however, state that *"All de-mining operations along the border areas between Thailand and Cambodia shall be without prejudice to the rights of Thailand and Cambodia with regard to the land boundary under international law."* Further details can be found in Section IV of this document.

As of 1 March 2022, TMAC's deminers have been requested to stop the operations in 34 operational areas covering 14,313,869 square metres in 6 provinces, as follows:

<b>Province</b>	<b>No. of Operational Areas</b>	<b>Total area (square metres)</b>
Ubon Ratchathani	3	587,121
Si Sa Ket	4	2,297,434
Surin	5	2,456,417
Buri Ram	5	267,275
Sa Kaeo	10	5,878,244
Trat	7	2,827,378
<b>Total</b>	34	14,313,869



Area to be Demarcated in 6 provinces (14,313,869 sq.m.)

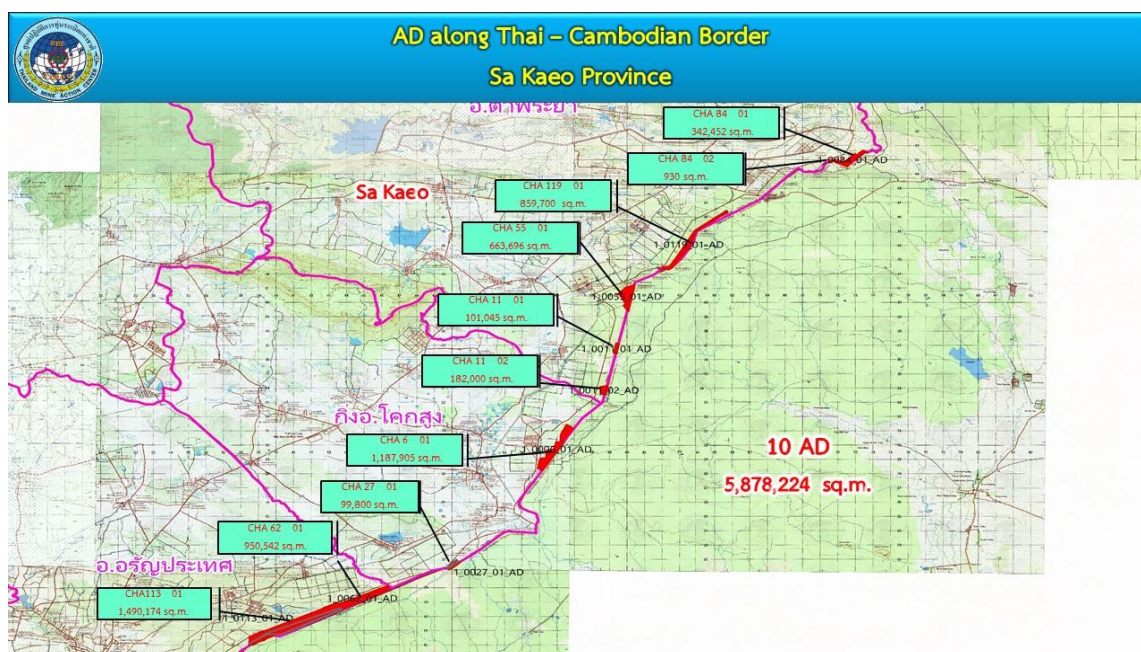


1. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Ubon Ratchathani Province





2. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Si Sa Ket Province

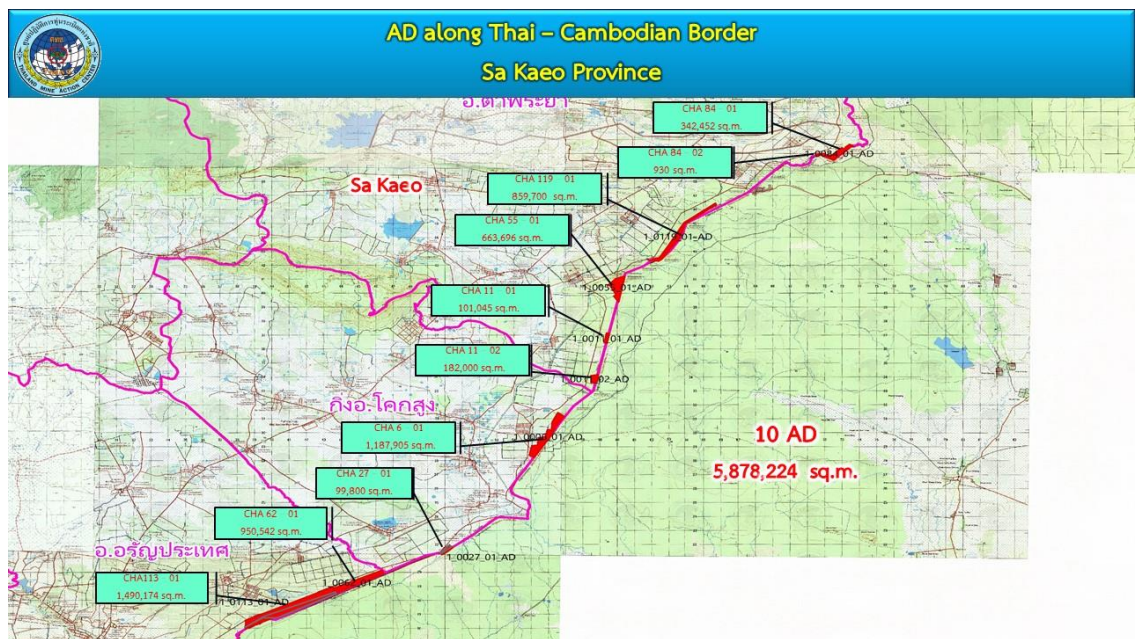


3. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Surin Province





4. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Buri Ram Province



5. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Sa Kaeo Province





## 6. Areas to be Demarcated along the Thai – Cambodian Border in Trat Province

After several unsuccessful attempts to access the areas, the Thai side decided to suspend the demining operations in the above-mentioned areas in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding. Currently, such areas in which TMAC is unable to perform the demining operation cover 14,313,869 square metres of ADs, which account for 38.72 per cent of all the remaining areas of 36,968,469 square metres to be cleared in order to fulfill Thailand's obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

## **EFFORTS TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES**

Over the past few years, Thailand has put its great efforts towards overcoming the challenges that prevent it from fulfilling the Article 5 obligations by the end of the second extension. These efforts include effective management of resources and aid from international partners, closer cooperation between domestic agencies towards the demining efforts, e.g. the Ruang Phueng operations, as well as enhancing the efforts towards strengthening bilateral cooperation with its neighbouring countries and the cooperation at the regional and multilateral levels.

Since most of the efforts to resolve the issue of accessing the areas along the border are ongoing and will continue during the requested extension period, details of such efforts will be contained in Section IV of this document.

#### **IV. WORK PLAN TOWARDS COMPLETION OF ARTICLE 5 OBLIGATIONS**

Despite challenges, Thailand remains fully committed to completing its obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. Thailand intends to complete its mine clearance operations within the second extension timeframe, if situations permit. In an unfortunate case where completion within the second extension timeframe is not possible, Thailand intends to continue its efforts during the requested extension period under the following work plan:

##### **WORK PLAN FOR MINE ACTION OPERATIONS DURING THE REMAINING PERIOD OF THE SECOND EXTENSION (2022 – 2023)**

Work Plan in 2022 - 2023 is part of the Five-Year Work Plan that Thailand has been implementing since the beginning of the second extension. As Thailand has approached the final stage of its mine clearance operations, Thailand plans to expedite the process in the remaining areas left to be released, which cover 36,968,469 square metres of land (as of 1 March 2022).

In 2022, Thailand plans to release 17,386,841 square metres of land, through TS and Clearance method. Thailand still expects to be able to perform mine clearance operations in some ADs by continuing its efforts to seek cooperation from its neighbouring country.

In 2023, TMAC will mobilise all available resources to deal with the remaining 8,598,192 square metres of CHAs and 14,313,869 square metres of ADs. TMAC believes that the remaining 8,598,192 square metres of CHAs can be released before the end of the second extension. However, access to the 14,313,869 square metres of ADs will remain the key challenge for the Thai deminers, which has led Thailand to decide to request for the third extension.

Plan for 2022 - 2023													
As of 1 Oct 2021													
Unit	Province	District	Remaining Areas 2020	Released Areas 2021	Remaining Area 1 Oct 2021			Total	2022		2023		Remarks
					SHA	CHA	AD		sq.m	Units	Operable	AD	
HMAU 1	1. Sa Kaeo	Ta Phra-ya	-	-	-	-	2,149,823	2,149,823	-	-	-	2,149,823	Neen Sornboon, Romsa, Thabiam Village
		Khoksung	1,287,705	-	-	-	1,287,705	1,287,705	-	-	-	1,287,705	Nongchan, Nong-ya-keao Village
		Aranayapraphet	2,440,716	-	-	-	2,440,716	2,440,716	-	-	-	2,440,716	Peral, Phu Nam Niang Village
	Total HMAU 1		3,728,421	-	-	-	5,878,244	5,878,244	-	-	-	5,878,244	
HMAU 2	2. Trat	Bo-rai	3,009,926	3,175,130	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		Mueang Trat	10,061,002	4,007,310	-	5,616,852	436,840	6,053,692	5,616,852	(26) / H2	-	436,840	CHA 252 01
		Khlong Yai	7,391,620	2,352,669	-	2,648,413	2,390,538	5,038,951	-	-	2,648,413	2,390,538	Hat lek
Total HMAU 2			20,462,548	9,535,109	-	8,265,265	2,827,378	11,092,643	5,616,852	H2	2,648,413	2,827,378	
HMAU 3	3. Buri Ram	Lahansai	644,106	453,545	-	98,154	92,407	190,561	98,154	(1) / HTMAC	-	92,407	CHA 367 02/03/04/05
		Bankruad	801,582	652,970	-	-	158,403	158,403	-	-	-	158,403	CHA 386 01/01
			1,445,688	1,106,515	-	98,154	250,810	348,964	98,154	HTMAC	-	250,810	
					-								
	4. Surin	Phnomdonyai	1,609,712	-	-	1,008,423	601,289	1,609,712	1,008,423	(6) / H1	-	601,289	Chongchom
		Kab Choeng	5,016,646	1,900,647	-	1,260,871	1,855,128	3,115,999	1,260,871	(11) / NPA	-	1,855,128	Chongqing, Chong rayi
		Sangkha	667,261	-	-	667,261	-	667,261	268,824	(1) / HTMAC	398,437	-	
		Buached	1,173,100	1,137,800	-	35,300	-	35,300	35,300	(1) / HTMAC	-	-	
			8,466,719	3,038,447	-	2,971,855	2,456,417	5,428,272	2,573,418	H3+HTMAC+NPA	398,437	2,456,417	
	5. Si Saket	Phusing	1,310,774	-	-	1,310,774	-	1,310,774	1,310,774	(14) / H3	-	-	
		Khun-han	1,214,107	-	-	1,214,107	-	1,214,107	1,214,107	(9) / H3	-	-	
		Kantharakak	3,863,001	-	-	1,565,567	2,297,434	3,863,001	1,565,567	(28) / H3	-	2,297,434	Preah Viheah
			6,387,882	-	-	4,090,448	2,297,434	6,387,882	4,090,448	H3	-	2,297,434	
	6. Ubon	Nam-yuen	2,367,162	-	-	2,036,058	331,104	2,367,162	2,036,058	(30) / H3+TDA	Air Support	331,104	Chong anma
		Ratchathani	2,764,766	-	-	2,764,766	-	2,764,766	-	-	2,764,766	-	
		Buntharik	1,557,032	-	-	1,557,032	-	1,557,032	-	-	1,557,032	-	
		6,688,960	-	-	6,357,856	331,104	6,688,960	2,036,058	H3+TDA	4,321,798	331,104		
Total HMAU 3			22,989,249	4,144,962	-	13,518,313	5,335,765	18,854,078	8,798,078	H3+H1+HTMAC+NPA	4,720,235	5,335,765	
HMAU 4	7. Phitsanulok	Chattrakhan	13,262,427	9,060,972	4,201,455	-	-	4,201,455	2,971,911	(1) / H1	1,229,544	-	Ban Romkai
Total HMAU 4			13,262,427	9,060,972	4,201,455	-	-	4,201,455	2,971,911	H1	1,229,544	-	
Grand Total			60,442,645	22,741,043	4,201,455	21,783,578	14,041,387	40,026,420		17,386,841	8,598,192	14,041,387	
Remarks : 1. Information as of 30 Sep 2021 2. Plan is subjected to change 3. In 2021, TMAC found additional 187,573 sq.m.												22,639,579	

### THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN FOR THE REQUESTED EXTENSION PERIOD (2023 – 2026)

Since Thailand expects to be able to release the additional areas of at least 22,654,600 square metres (all mine contaminated areas, except the ADs) by the end of the second extension, the Three-Year Work Plan for the requested extension period (November 2023 – December 2026) will focus upon the 14,313,869 square metres of ADs left to be cleared along the border and the issues of access to these areas that need to be resolved.

Thailand's Three-Year Work Plan for the extended period will primarily focus on 5 areas as follows:

#### 1. MINE ACTION OPERATIONS IN THE ADs

The Mine Action Operations in the ADs will be divided into 3 phases based on the difficulty in gaining access to the areas. Since the areas are yet to be demarcated under the MOU, consultations with its neighbouring country will be pre-conditions for Thailand prior to accessing these areas. The 3 phases will be as follows:

AD 3 Year Plan											
No.	Description	Province	District	Subdistrict	Village	Size	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Remarks
	AD										
1	84-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Thapsadet	Romsai	342,452			342,452	342,452	
2	84-02/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Thapsadet	Romsai	930			930	930	
3	11-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Ta-phraya	Thap-siam	101,045			101,045	101,045	
4	11-02/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Ta-phraya	Thap-siam	182,000			182,000	182,000	
5	55-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Ta-phraya	Khao Lukchang	663,696			663,696	663,696	
6	119-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Ta-phraya	Ta-phraya	Noen Somboon	859,700		859,700		859,700	
7	6-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Khoksung	Khoksung	Nong-yakao	1,187,905		1,187,905		1,187,905	
8	27-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Khoksung	Nonmakmun	Nongchan	99,800		99,800		99,800	
9	62-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Aranyaprathet	Parai	Phu-namkiang	950,542	950,542			950,542	
10	113-01/AD	Sa Kaeo	Aranyaprathet	Parai	Parai	1,490,174	1,490,174			1,490,174	
10	10	Sa Kaeo				5,878,244	2,440,716	2,147,405	1,290,123	5,878,244	
11	227-01/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Hatlek	58,878			58,878	58,878	
12	227-02/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Hatlek	26,253			26,253	26,253	
13	228-01/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Khong-hin	1,421,560		1,421,560		1,421,560	
14	229-01/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Khong-hin	357,452		357,452		357,452	
15	248-01/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Khotsai	418,465	418,465			418,465	
16	248-02/01/AD	Trat	Khongyai	Hatlek	Khotsai	107,930	107,930			107,930	
17	252-01/AD	Trat	Mueangtrat	Chamrak	Chamrak	436,840	436,840			436,840	
7	7	Trat				2,827,378	963,235	1,779,012	85,131	2,827,378	
18	386-01/01/AD	Buri Ram	Bankruat	Bueng Charoen	Saitriphatthana 4	158,403	158,403			158,403	
19	367-02/03/AD	Buri Ram	Lahansai	Nongwang	Phathairumphon	61,244	61,244			61,244	
20	367-02/04/AD	Buri Ram	Lahansai	Nongwang	Phathairumphon	14,041	14,041			14,041	
21	367-02/05/AD	Buri Ram	Lahansai	Nongwang	Phathairumphon	17,122	17,122			17,122	
4	4	Buri Ram				250,810	250,810			250,810	
22	393-03/AD	Surin	Kabchoeng	Ta-kian	Sakonphatthana	291,543		291,543		291,543	
23	413-01/AD	Surin	Kabchoeng	Dan	Dan	22,343		22,343		22,343	
24	413-02/AD	Surin	Kabchoeng	Dan	Chongchok-chon	469,242		469,242		469,242	
25	413-03/AD	Surin	Kabchoeng	Dan	Chongchok-chon	1,072,000	1,072,000			1,072,000	
26	395-01/AD	Surin	Phnomdongrak	Bakdai	Thaisantisuk	601,289	601,289			601,289	
5	5	Surin				2,456,417	1,673,289	783,128		2,456,417	
27	436-01/AD	Si Saket	Kantharalak	Saonthongchai	Phumsaron	1,084,066			1,084,066	1,084,066	
28	436-03/AD	Si Saket	Kantharalak	Saonthongchai	Phumsaron	394,232			394,232	394,232	
29	436-04/AD	Si Saket	Kantharalak	Saonthongchai	Phumsaron	709,787			709,787	709,787	
30	439-02/01/AD	Si Saket	Kantharalak	Lalai	Ko	109,349		109,349		109,349	
4	4	Si Saket				2,297,434		109,349	2,188,085	2,297,434	
31	457-01/AD	Ubon Ratchathani	Nam Yuen	Song	Nam Yuen	331,104		331,104		331,104	
1	1	Ubon Ratchathani				331,104		331,104		331,104	
31	31	Total				14,041,387	5,328,050	5,149,998	3,563,339	14,041,387	

### Phase 1 (Nov 2023 – Oct 2024)

The focus of this phase will be in the areas that TMAC has estimated to be least difficult to gain access with consent from the neighbour. These areas covering 5,328,050 square metres in 5 provinces, namely Sa Kaeo, Trat, Buri Ram, Surin and Si Sa Ket.

### Phase 2 (Nov 2024 – Oct 2025)

The focus of this phase will be in 5 provinces, namely Sa Kaeo, Trat, Surin, Si Sa Ket, and Ubon Ratchathani, covering 5,149,998 square metres.

### Phase 3 (Nov 2025 – Dec 2026)

The focus of this phase will be in the areas with complicated issues that may require extensive consultations with the neighbouring country. These areas cover 3,563,339 square metres in 3 provinces, namely Sa Kaeo, Trat, and Si Sa Ket.

### **Work Plan for Mine Clearance along the Thai – Cambodian Border**

**Step 1:** Coordination with the Cambodian side on access to the areas to be demarcated (ADs) will be attempted at the local or operational level through the Office of Border Coordination.

**Step 2:** If there remain differing views on identifying and/or access to areas for demining operations, it will be referred to the Thai - Cambodian Regional Border Committee (RBC) for consideration, based on the principle that the demining operations is carried out for humanitarian purposes under the Convention and shall be without prejudice to the rights of both parties regarding the land boundary under international law.

**Step 3:** The Thailand – Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC) framework may be utilised to strengthen bilateral demining cooperation along the border, building upon the success of the “pilot project”, which was carried out during March - April 2020. The following approaches may be taken:

- 1) TMAC and CMAC to clear their respective “matching areas” close in proximity.
- 2) If required, TMAC and CMAC may carry out “joint demining operations” in some of the ADs.
- 3) If required, TMAC and CMAC may seek assistance from neutral body(ies) for the demining operations in highly sensitive areas.

**Step 4:** Step 4 Thai-Cambodian Joint Commission on Demarcation for Land Boundary (JBC) can be consulted so as to access the areas to be demined. While cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia on humanitarian demining in areas to be demarcated (ADs) is to be discussed in details and pushed forward within the RBC and GBC frameworks, the Thailand-Cambodia Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC) will serve as a support mechanism to sustain and strengthen the commitment of both sides on this matter.

Since these areas are subject to land boundary survey and demarcation under the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia, the process of which is a complicated and technical issue that may take several years to complete, access to the border areas may pose security as well as political concerns to the concerned neighbouring country. Thailand will continue to hold consultations with its neighbour under available channels in order to seek mutually agreed solutions for the demining operations. Thailand reaffirms that its humanitarian mine action operations will be carried out solely for humanitarian purposes in accordance with Thailand’s obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, and that such operations shall be without prejudice to the rights of Thailand and Cambodia with regard to the land boundary under international law. Thailand is committed to resolving the ongoing issues in order to gain access to the areas for humanitarian demining purposes during the requested extension period. Details of such efforts are contained below under “Strengthening Bilateral Ties with the Neighbouring Countries” and “Enhancing International Cooperation at All Levels”.

Since access to the areas remains a challenge for Thailand, the ADs are largely unknown to the Thai deminers. As a result, the estimation with regard to the extent and the density of mines and UXO, as well as the methods and cost of transportation into the areas with challenging geographical landscape, and the cost of carrying out the demining operations can be determined with much accuracy only when TMAC gains access to the areas. Nonetheless, the Royal Thai Government is committed to continuing to provide the primary source of funding to Thailand’s mine action operations during the Three-Year Work Plan during the

requested extension period. Resources, equipment and personnel will be effectively mobilised towards the execution of the mine clearance operations under the Three-Year Work Plan.

### **3. STRENGTHENING BILATERAL TIES WITH THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

Thailand enjoys excellent bilateral relations with its neighbours and is a firm believer that the key to fulfilling mine clearance obligations is to promote and strengthen bilateral ties with its neighbouring countries which share the land boundaries with Thailand. Thailand has been pursuing its efforts to strengthened the ties with all countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, and Myanmar, in the mine action efforts since the entry into force of the Convention for Thailand.

Currently, the remaining mine contaminated areas along the border include only areas bordering Lao PDR and areas bordering Cambodia. TMAC can currently access areas bordering Lao PDR and is determined to finish releasing all these areas by the current timeframe.

Since 2020, with the ongoing issues of accessing the contaminated areas along the Thailand – Cambodia border, Thailand has been making efforts to promote trust and strengthen its cooperation with Cambodia through different existing bilateral frameworks and “pilot project” bilateral demining cooperations, initiated by TMAC.

#### **The "Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia"**

In 2018, TMAC initiated a joint demining project between Thailand and Cambodia in order to strengthen the cooperation between the two neighbouring countries in demining operations. The "Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Thailand and Cambodia" was proposed by TMAC, and was agreed by the Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC). The project was later endorsed by the 13<sup>th</sup> Thai - Cambodian General Border Committee Meeting, held on 19 - 21 March 2018 in Bangkok, and reflected in the Record of Discussion on Demining Cooperation along the Border of the Kingdom of Thailand and Cambodia, dated 17 September 2018. The objective of the project was to support the socio-economic development in the areas along the border by returning safe land back to the community, as much as to build trust between government agencies operating along the border.

The project took place in March – April 2020, during which TMAC and CMAC constantly communicated and exchanged information in the spirit of cooperation. It enabled Thailand to release additional 95,000 square metres of land in Aranyaprathet District, Sa Kaeo Province, and Cambodia to release 123,810 square metres of land in Poipet District, Banteay Meanchey Province. After the areas were released, Thailand conducted a Quality Assurance (QA) and a stakeholder meeting in accordance with the relevant standards, in order to build confidence for the stakeholders and raise awareness on the landmines/UXO problems along the border.

Thailand hopes to use the success of this pilot project as a catalyst for future projects to support the operations during the Three-Year Work Plan. Therefore, despite the delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 31 August 2021, TMAC proposed to CMAC a new project for cooperation and CMAC responded 30 September 2021, indicating that CMAC “strongly welcomes and supports” TMAC’s initiative.



Subsequently, TMAC has proposed the areas for operations, and is currently waiting for comments and suggestions from CMAC. Recently, the Department of Border Affairs of the Royal Thai Armed Force Headquarters and TMAC have invited the representatives from the Embassy of Cambodia, including the Military Attaché, to visit the areas cleared under the pilot project, and part of the areas in Sa Kaeo Province proposed by TMAC to CMAC to be included under the new project. This area is intended to be developed into a Customs checkpoint once the mine action operations under the new project have become successful. TMAC expects that the effort will build mutual trust between the two nations, as much as to bring economic prosperity into the area, benefiting the people living on both sides of the border.

Once TMAC and CMAC has preliminarily agreed on the selected areas, the plan will be submitted to the Thailand - Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC) for endorsement. The 15<sup>th</sup> GBC, previously scheduled in February 2022, is currently postponed upon request of Cambodia to be held in a physical format.





### **Thailand - Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC)**

Thailand - Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC) is a military cooperation framework that deals directly with security issues in the border areas. Thailand and Cambodia have been cooperating on humanitarian demining under this framework. The 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GBC on 21 March 2018 in Bangkok agreed to *“support cooperation on de-mining by Thailand Mine Action Center and by Cambodian Mine Action Center. The Meeting took note of the Thai proposal to cooperate on de-mining in Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in the border areas for successful implementation of the SEZ development. All de-mining operations along the border areas between Thailand and Cambodia shall be without prejudice to the rights of Thailand and Cambodia with regard to the land boundary under international law.”* and to *“continue to support Cambodian Mine Action Center and Thailand Mine Action Center to convene the meetings on a regular basis to strengthen their cooperation.”*

The 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GBC on 14 February 2019 in Cambodia continued to support such cooperation and take note of the Thai proposal to cooperate on demining in the border areas for mutual socio-economic development benefits, as well as recognise that all demining cooperation shall be without prejudice to the rights of the parties with regard to the land boundary under international law. The Meeting also noted with appreciation and supported the mine clearance “pilot project”, as well as encouraged and supported both sides to continue their close cooperation and to concretise their plan for demining cooperation along the border.

In preparation for the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GBC, which was initially set to be held on 25 February 2022 via video conference, Thailand also intended to propose additional proposals to strengthen the demining cooperation between the two countries and to expedite the implementation of the Convention in accordance with respective parties’ obligations under



the Convention. The Meeting is currently postponed upon the request of the Cambodian side to be held physically at the appropriate time in the near future.

As part of the Three-Year Work Plan during the requested extension period, Thailand will continue to push forward the humanitarian demining cooperation under the GBC framework. Being fully committed to the obligations under the Convention, Thailand believes that such cooperation will strengthen closer ties between the two parties and will allow relevant agencies from both countries to carry out mine action operations in accordance with their respective obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, including in the areas to which Thailand is facing access issues.

### **Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC)**

In addition to cooperation at the agencies' level and the military framework, Thailand has been making its utmost effort to push forward the cooperation under the framework of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JC), which is co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Cambodia. The JC is a major mechanism to promote cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia in all aspects. Previously, demining cooperation had never been incorporated under the JC framework. Thailand took the opportunity to raise the issue of humanitarian demining cooperation along the Thailand-Cambodia border areas at the 11<sup>th</sup> JC hosted by Cambodia on 16-18 December 2021.

At the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the JC on 18 December 2021 in Cambodia, H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, raised the issue of humanitarian demining cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia. Prior to that, at the Senior Official Meeting (SOM) on 17 December 2021, Mr. Thani Thongphakdi, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, also brought up this issue with the Cambodian side. The Permanent Secretary specifically highlighted the issue of access to the areas to be demarcated along the Thai-Cambodian border for the humanitarian demining operations. He urged both sides to work together to facilitate demining operations in these areas based on humanitarian consideration and both countries' obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. He also noted that it is of the common understanding that the said demining operation will be without prejudice to the demarcation of Thailand-Cambodia land boundary under international law.

As proposed by the Thai side, the Record of Discussion of the 11th JC Meeting reflects the issue of demining cooperation between the two countries in paragraphs 24 - 25, as follows:

*“24. The Meeting welcomed the successful operations under the “Pilot Project on Demining Cooperation along the Border of Cambodia and Thailand,” carried out by CMAC and TMAC in March – April 2020, which enabled both sides to release additional mine-contaminated areas. Both sides note that the cooperation project was a success despite the COVID-19 pandemic situation.*

*25. Both sides agreed to continue to work together to further facilitate the humanitarian demining operations in the areas along the border, with the objective of fulfilling each side's respective obligations under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.”*

As part of the Three-Year Work Plan, Thailand will continue to strengthen its ties with Cambodia through the JC mechanism.

### **Strengthening bilateral mechanisms under the Three-Year Work Plan**

Under the Three-Year Work Plan, as Thailand enters the final stage of completing its mine clearance obligations under Article 5 of the Convention, Thailand will continue to push forward its efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation on humanitarian demining operations with Cambodia through the abovementioned bilateral frameworks, as well as cooperation at the agency level between TMAC and CMAC, with the purpose of facilitating the implementation of each side's obligations under Article 5 of the Convention.

Thailand will continue to reiterate the common understanding, as agreed under the GBC framework, that such mine clearance operations by TMAC and CMAC, carried out for humanitarian purposes and for the implementation of Article 5 of the Treaty, shall be without prejudice to the rights of both sides with regard to land boundary under international law. However, should the issues regarding access to the areas to be demarcated arise, and cannot be resolved at the operational level, the Thai - Cambodian Regional Border Committee (RBC) and the GBC can also provide effective platforms to resolve such issues.

### **3. ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AT ALL LEVELS**

In addition to strengthening bilateral ties with the neighbouring countries, Thailand's Three-Year Work Plan also include enhancing international cooperation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

#### **Cooperations with International Partners**

In addition to building ties and developing joint demining cooperation with the neighbouring countries, Thailand is also committed to strengthening cooperation with its international partners, including Japan, Norway and the United States, and non-government organisations. Innovative approaches to expedite demining operations with the involvement of third-parties in the ADs, with prior consent and following pre-established conditions set by both parties, may be considered.

#### **Regional framework**

In addition to the efforts at the bilateral level, Thailand sees the benefits of strengthening the cooperation on humanitarian demining operations for the purpose of fulfilling the obligations under Article 5 of the Treaty through the regional mechanism.

The relevant regional framework on demining efforts in ASEAN is the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC), which was established in 2013 with the Secretariat located in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The objective of ARMAC is to strengthen the cooperation among the ASEAN Member States in the areas of mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) clearance through experience-sharing, training and other capacity-building activities.

### ***ARMAC's Work Plan for 2022 – 2024***

Currently, ARMAC is working on the drafting of the new Work Plan for 2022 – 2024, which is likely to be the extension of the current Work Plan for 2019 – 2021. Thailand's priority is to include action-oriented cooperation in mine action efforts under the new Work Plan of ARMAC. At the ARMAC's 17th Steering Committee (SC) on 14 December 2021, H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Ambassador of Thailand to Cambodia, in his capacity as Thailand's Representative to the SC of the ARMAC, expressed concerns on the progress of clearing land mines and ERW, and suggested that the new Work Plan place more emphasis on mine action efforts, including more projects targeting technical assistance, international cooperation, and needs assessment. Such efforts to include concrete actions will hopefully contribute to strengthening real Mine Action efforts between the ASEAN Member States.

### ***The drafting of the Guidelines and Action Plan for mine clearance operations in ASEAN***

To resolve the ongoing issues of mine action operations along the border areas, Thailand sees the benefits of establishing Guidelines and Action Plan for mine clearance operations at the regional level as a starting point for the cooperation on mine action efforts among the ASEAN Member States.

At the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of SC on 30 March 2021, in Phnom Penh, Thailand proposed that ARMAC convene a regional conference for exchanging experiences and best practices in mine clearance operations along the border areas with other regional organisations. Such activities would provide opportunities for the ASEAN Member States to discuss these issues with relevant agencies, for example, the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) – an organisation which has experiences in demining operations along the Peru-Chile border. Thailand hoped that such efforts would also contribute to establishing the ASEAN Regional Guidelines and Action Plan on demining operations in the areas along the border, which will be beneficial, especially in the areas to be demarcated.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SC on 14 December 2021 agreed on the proposal from Thailand on the organisation of such regional conference, as well as the drafting of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines and Action Plan by a technical working group with membership from interested ASEAN Member States and other relevant parties and international organisations. The SC also agreed that ARMAC shall convene another regional conference to provide an opportunity for Member States to discuss the draft Guidelines and Action Plan, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), the technical working group, which also includes the NPA and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has agreed to meet in May 2022 in order to prepare for the drafting of the guidelines. Thailand has also announced its intention to make a financial contribution to fund the regional conference.

Thailand will continue to contribute to the drafting process of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines and Action Plan on demining cooperation. With such Guidelines and Action Plan in place, Thailand aims to push forward an effort to turn these two documents into concrete actions through the implementation of pilot projects between interested ASEAN Member States.

### **Multilateral framework**

In recent years, Thailand has played an active role under the framework of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Thailand was as a member of the Committee on Victim Assistance in 2020 – 2021, and the Chair of the Committee in 2021, and has recently been appointed a member of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance for the term 2022 – 2023.

Thailand believes that the work of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, including the “Individualised Approach”, could potentially contribute to the success of the mine action efforts and the fulfillment of obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. Thailand believes that the “Individualised Approach” and other relevant activities will help open up venues of cooperation and assistance in support of its demining efforts along the border with Cambodia.

At the time of writing (1 March 2022), Cambodia has already pushed forward its proposal to utilise the Individualised Approach the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance. Thailand, with the hope of fostering greater synergy under the Convention, intends to engage the Cambodian side within the auspices of the Convention and seek cooperation from the Cambodian side on the possibility aligning and synchronising mine action efforts. These can be carried out through initiatives such as pursuing “joint Individualised Approach” or other activities dedicated to the last pocket of contamination in Thailand, within the framework of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance.

Thailand believes that this approach, jointly carried out by the concerned neighbouring countries, based on the spirit of cooperation and trust in the Convention, will provide opportunity for both sides to not only work together in the mine action, but also interact with, and connect to possible donor(s), mine action operators and other stakeholders. Thailand is hopeful that the proposed platform will lead to a successful outcome and help both sides to fulfill their respective obligations under the Convention.

## **4. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Thailand is fully aware that strengthening community engagement is the key towards the success of the mine action operations. As part of the Three-Year Work Plan, Thailand will continue to strengthen community engagement in all main stages of its mine action operations, some of which in cooperation with a local non-government organisation.

Part of the efforts to build up community engagement will be carried out through the project “Vocational Training Programme(s) for Mekong Region Communities Effected from Landmine (VTMREL)” to be co-proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA) to the ASEAN Secretariat for the funding from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund. The project aims towards reducing poverty and risks from landmines/UXO, including by promoting income opportunities in the communities previously affected by landmines, and using it as a sustainable development model for other ASEAN Member States. After assisting TMAC with the mine clearance operations in the mine contaminated areas, TDA and its partners will conduct vocational trainings including appropriate plant or animal farming for the locals, in order to promote economic activities and markets in the Mekong region communities (Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Thailand). In addition, as a part of this community engagement project, TDA will also provide Mine Risk

Education (MRE) to people in the community during the trainings to remind them of the danger of mines that may still be affecting other contaminated areas.

## **5. CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE UNCLEARED AREAS**

Thailand is endeavoured towards completing its Three-Year Work Plan by releasing all mine contaminated areas by the end of requested period. While these areas are yet to be cleared, Contingency Plan for the Uncleared Areas will be put in place.

The Contingency Plan for the Uncleared Areas comprises the the following:

- **Putting up signs to warn the locals and visitors of the mine contamination.** The signs will be made in different languages including Thai, English and the language of the neighbouring country to which the areas are adjacent. Such warnings will help prevent accidents in the areas that are yet to be cleared by the deminers.
- **Continued Emphasis on Mine Risk Education.** Warning signs will be coupled with emphasis on MRE especially for the locals and wanderers, e.g. mushroom gatherers in the areas. Community engagement will be strengthened for this purpose.
- **Establish safe patrol lanes.** Safe patrol lanes will be established for both sides to conduct joint patrol to help prevent wanderers from accidentally enter the contaminated areas.
- **Continued Commitment towards Victim Assistance.** Commitment towards VA will be continued as part of the Contingency Plan in case an accident occurs in the contaminated areas, including victim evacuation plan for the remote areas.
- **Commitment towards Dialogues with the Neighbouring Countries.** Efforts will be made by Thailand to continue dialogues with the neighbouring countries to resolve the issues in ADs.

## **POTENTIAL RISK FACTORS TOWARDS COMPLETION FOR THE REQUESTED EXTENSION PERIOD**

Since these areas are subject to land boundary survey and demarcation under the MOU between Thailand and Cambodia, access to the border areas may pose security as well as political concerns to the concerned neighbouring country. Thailand will continue to hold consultations with its neighbour under available channels and frameworks in order to seek mutually agreed solutions for the deminers to gain access to the areas. Without consent of the neighbouring country, Thailand will have to suspend its operations in the areas. Thailand will put its utmost efforts in forging cooperation with its neighbouring countries in order to fulfill its obligations under the Convention.

Other unforeseen circumstances include force majeure that are outside control of the parties involved that cannot be evaded through the exercise of due care, such as natural disasters, change in terrain, political uncertainties, and major budget cuts due to the need for urgent reallocation of funds.

## **THE POST-THREE-YEAR WORKING PLAN**

After the Three-Year Work Plan has been achieved and the demining operations are no longer required in Thailand, Thailand will continue to dedicate itself to providing support to other States Parties, including its neighbouring countries, which require assistance in the humanitarian mine action efforts. Thailand will continue to cooperate with the international community towards the objective of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, by sharing its experiences and best practices, as well as its expertise and equipment, where applicable, including within the frameworks of ARMAC and the Convention. Thailand believes that such experiences and lessons learnt that it has been gained during the past two decades, together with its international partners, including non-government organisations, in the mine action efforts in Thailand will continue to provide a useful guidance for humanitarian mine action operations in other countries.