



STATEMENT OF H.E. Dr. LY THUCH
SENIOR MINISTER AND HEAD OF THE CAMBODIAN DELEGATION
AT THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

24 NOVEMBER 2023

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

- Your Excellency Ambassador Thomas Göbel, President of the Convention
- Your Royal Highness
- Excellencies, Esteemed Delegates, Distinguished Guests, and Respected Participants

On Behalf of Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN MANET, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, I am deeply honored and humbled to stand before you today as I assume the role of President of the 5th Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the trust and confidence that you have bestowed upon my country and its people, I express profound gratitude for the honor and trust vested in the Royal Government of Cambodia. It is a privilege to serve in this capacity, and I am fully committed to advancing the objectives and principles of this vital international treaty.

Our acknowledgment goes to the Convention itself, which stands as a beacon of hope, guiding us in our collective mission to rid the world of the scourge of anti-personnel mines. We are indebted to the principles and the unity it fosters among nations.

Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

As we gather here for the 21st Meeting of the States Parties, it is essential to reflect on the progress we have made since the Convention's inception. Our collective efforts have indeed made the world a safer place, but it is not without its challenges. We are making

significant strides in ensuring the safety and security of our global community. However, we are constantly reminded that new conflicts and wars, such as those in Ukraine and most recently in Gaza, continue to test our resolve.

Allow me to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the donors supporting mine action around the world. Your unwavering support remains the cornerstone of our endeavors, driving our commitment and progress.

I would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to our previous presidency, Germany. Under their leadership, significant progress was made, and their dedication to the cause of mine clearance has been instrumental in advancing our mission. We thank them for their unwavering commitment and their exceptional work in guiding the Convention. Please stand up and join me to applaud Ambassador Thomas Gobel, our former President, in recognition of his outstanding leadership and dedication to the convention.

I would also like to extend our profound gratitude to the brave deminers around the world who work tirelessly in often challenging and hazardous conditions. These individuals put their lives on the line to ensure the safety of their communities, and sadly, some have lost their lives or faced disabilities in the process. We owe a debt of gratitude to these courageous individuals who have made incredible sacrifices to save others. Their dedication and heroism serve as a powerful reminder of the profound impact of our mission.

Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The rise in conflicts and the continued use of anti-personnel mines globally necessitate our unwavering commitment to strengthening international humanitarian law, human rights, and human security. As we lead the Convention during this pivotal year, we look forward to sharing our experiences from the last decades and supporting all States Parties in achieving our common goal of "ending the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines."

In the year leading up to the Fifth Review Conference, we find ourselves at a unique juncture to:

❖ While recognizing the progress since the Fourth Review Conference, we must stress that there is much work ahead. Important lifesaving work remains to be done, and we must collectively strive to do more and do better.

❖ Refocusing the world's attention on the humanitarian imperative of the Convention is paramount. Raising awareness of its importance in ensuring the well-being and human rights of survivors and persons with disabilities is essential.

❖ Reinvigorating national efforts to implement remaining timebound commitments under the Convention is critical for sustained progress.

❖ Ensuring the further Universalization of the convention and the strengthening of the norm against the use of mines is imperative. We must address the current threat to this norm and unite in our commitment to its preservation.

Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The presidency of the Convention is an extraordinary task, and I am heartened to know that I am not alone. Drawing on suggestions from a wide range of actors, including the President of the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties – Germany - and the President Designate of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the States Parties – Japan, is crucial. The work of this Troika has never been as important, and I count on your support.

Our support extends to the Coordinating Committee, a group of friends of the Convention, and international organizations. Civil society, a driving force and a key partner in the Convention, will also play a pivotal role. In the weeks and months ahead, collaboration with these entities will strengthen our collective resolve.

While all areas of the Convention are a top priority for Cambodia's presidency, we emphasize the following key areas:

1. Universalization: Our aim is to ensure the continuity of a coordinated approach to promoting the universalization of the Convention. We believe that having more States join the family of States Parties is crucial for strengthening the norm against the use of anti-personnel mines.

2. Implementation of Article 5: Survey, clearance, mine risk education, and risk reduction are paramount to ensuring no future victims and alleviating current suffering in mine-affected communities. Efforts must be intensified to heighten awareness of the population regarding both historical and new contamination within the framework of the Convention.

3. Assistance to Victims: Delivering on the promise made to victims is non-negotiable. Cambodia looks forward to sharing its experience to ensure continued progress. Strengthening national responses and forging partnerships with sectors better placed to support long-term sustainable aid is crucial.

Mr. President, Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to share the inspiring example of Siem Reap, Cambodia, where the legacy of landmines has been overcome. Siem Reap, once marred by the presence of these insidious devices, has now thrived after the successful clearance of landmines. Today, millions of people from all over the world visit the magnificent Angkor Wat temple complex, which stands as a testament to the transformative power of mine clearance. This historic site, once threatened by landmines, now stands as a symbol of peace, culture, and heritage, attracting tourists and boosting the local economy. Angkor Wat and the people of Cambodia are eager to host you and offer you their hospitality next year for our 5th Review Conference.

In conclusion, I am confident that, as we embark on this journey together, we will further strengthen the bonds of international cooperation and renew our dedication to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Let us focus on the future with hope and optimism, drawing inspiration from the progress we have made and the lives we have saved. We are making significant efforts to make the world a safer place. However, we are always challenged by new conflicts and wars like those in Ukraine and Gaza.

To support victims and rid the world of anti-personnel mines, we must develop new ways to raise funds and share experiences. Let us unite in our advocacy and lobbying efforts to secure the resources needed to achieve our shared goal. Together, we can make a safer and more inclusive world, where the victims of landmines find hope, healing, and the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to this noble cause, and I look forward to working with each and every one of you in the pursuit of a mine-free world. Together, we can achieve remarkable progress and transform the lives of countless individuals and communities.

Thank you!



21st Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

STATEMENT

By

H.E. Dr. Ly Thuch

Senior Minister and First Vice-President of the
Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA)

Friday 24th November 2023
Geneva, Switzerland

Mine-Free Cambodia, Mine-Free World!

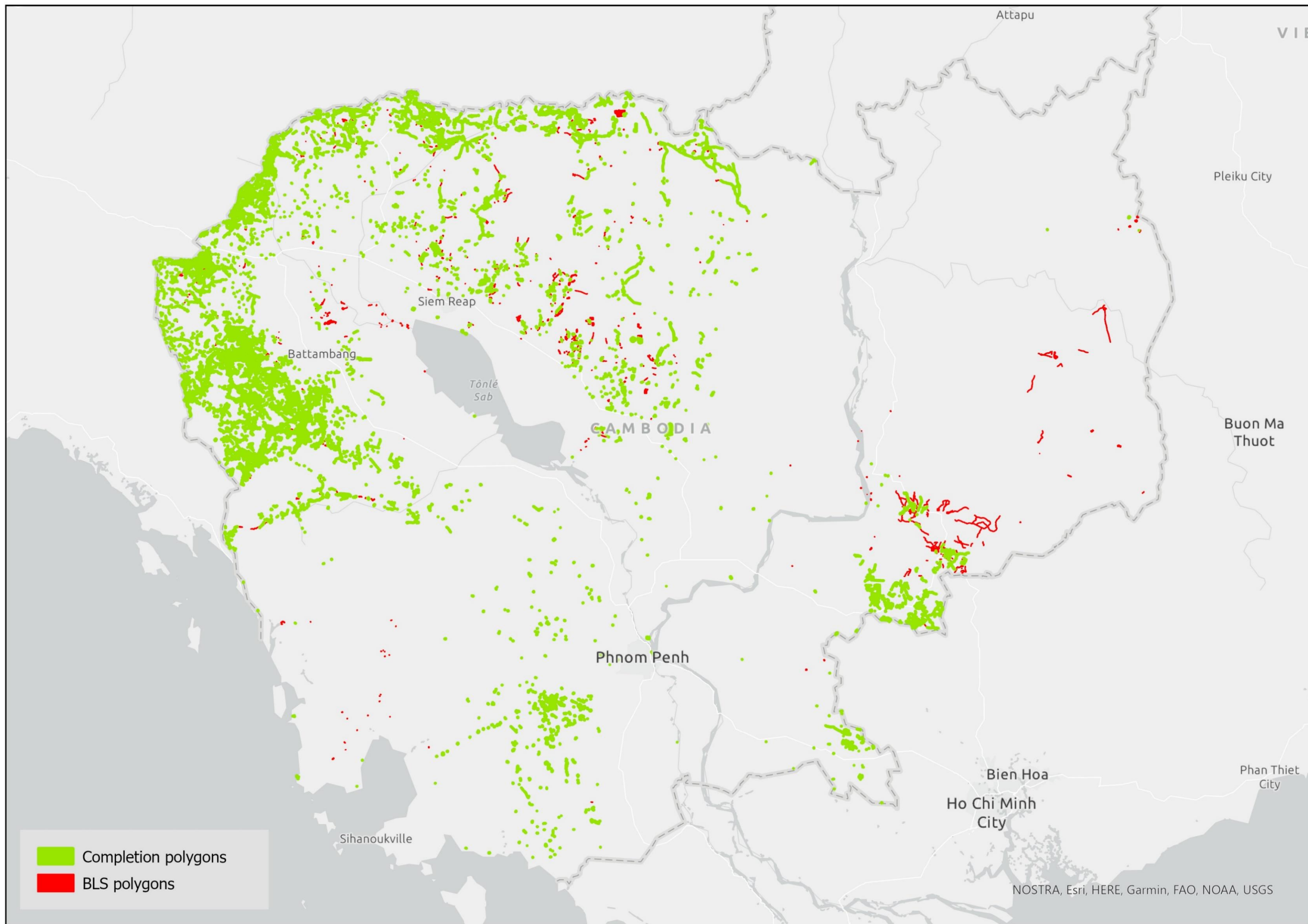














Presidential Task





CLEARING MINE AREA



CAMBODIA

25 to 29 November 2024



VICTIMS ASSISTANCE













Together



Mine-Free Cambodia, Mine-Free World!

