

The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World: the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

Cartagena, 1 December 2009

Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention

Cooperation and Assistance

Madame President,

Since Japan becoming a signatory to the Ottawa Convention, it has contributed more than 400 million U.S. dollars to international efforts on mine and unexploded ordinance (UXO) activities. Japan's policy and achievements in cooperation and assistance are summarized in our pamphlet titled "Zero New Victims" which are available at the entrance of this chamber. Through our multilateral and bilateral ODA activities, we have gained valuable experiences. I would like to share with you a couple of those experiences, which may inspire future activities in this area.

First, we have discovered that synergies between bilateral assistance and multilateral assistance can create far greater positive results than can be gained by bilateral assistance alone. Let me highlight our experience in Nicaragua as an example. Japan has provided assistance to clearance activities and introduced three Japanese made mine clearance machines through its bilateral assistance in coordination with its National Demining Commission. At the same time, Japan has been supporting a mine risk education program which is implemented by UNICEF. As an outcome, firstly we have contributed to reducing the number of victims through mine risk education and clearance activities, and secondly we have made a positive impact on Nicaragua's agricultural development by freeing up farm access roads and farm land in cleared areas. We hope this will also facilitate the Nicaraguan Government's efforts to comply with and to promptly implement its Article 5 obligations.

Madame President,

Another finding through our assistance activities is the importance of capacity building. Assistance to capacity building of affected countries is a particularly effective way of technical transfer. In Cambodia, through the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), Japan has not only extended monetary aid to clearance activities but also transferred technical skills by dispatching experts in information systems and logistics. We also supported CMAC for its research and development activities on demining equipment. We believe these assistances combined contributed to improvements in the Cambodia's capacity of its landmine related policies and systems.

Madame President,

The Government of Japan is a strong promoter of South-South cooperation. For example, this year Japan and CMAC decided to assist a training program in Colombia. The program is to enhance the organizational structure of the Presidential Program for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines (PAICMA) which had constraints in its human resources. While training was provided by CMAC, which has 18 years of experience in mine action, assistance for strengthening the capacity of PAICMA was provided by the Government of Japan, including the establishment of a monitoring system for PAICMA.

Let me talk a bit more about our cooperation in Colombia, the host country of this conference. In Colombia, Japan has proposed to establish, within a donor group of G24, a working group on anti-personnel landmine that donor states, international organizations and NGOs participate together. There have been a lot of assistances from various donors. However, those assistances were made mainly relying on individual appraisal of each donor. We found there the need to coordinate those donor's efforts by way of exchanging information and adjusting activities. Japan took initiative, as the then president of G24, in consolidating discussions in the working group and producing recommendations to the government of Colombia and the donor community.

Madame President,

Today, I am delighted to announce that just three days ago, Friday last week, first ever demining machines for Colombia arrived from Japan. Those two giant machines are now on exhibit at the park de la Marina, just 200 meters from this conference hall. I hope that many

participants will have a chance to visit the park and encounter those machines.

Madame President,

Regarding development aid, Japan believes that it is necessary and effective for mine-affected countries to clearly position mine action in their development plans. It is particularly important for post-conflict countries which go through the shift from the humanitarian assistance phase to the economic development phases. Japan will continue to undertake its assistance by putting into consideration affected countries' national development plans which we hope always include mine actions as their integral part.

Thank you.