

Intervention by Thailand

Clearing mined areas (Tuesday, 1 December 2009)

Madame President,

- Thailand has experienced a great deal about mine clearance over the past decade. We recognized that the sole employment of the traditional mine clearance method has been ineffective and caused unnecessary delays to the overall operation. Following the introduction of the land release methodology in which partial financial assistance was received from Japan, we were able to release a large area of safe land.

- As of October this year, Thailand has already identified a safe area of around 2,000 sq.km., which amounts to 78 percent of the total mine-affected area. There remain around 500 sq.km. left to be demined.

- Subsequent to the granting of Thailand's extension request, Thailand has been working tirelessly to conduct our mine clearance operations in accordance with our annual work plan proposed in Thailand's mine clearance extension request. The plan was formulated to assess priority areas to be cleared for each year from 2009-2018.

- In conducting the land release technique, processes of Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) are most essential. TMAC places great importance on this matter as such processes are compulsory before transferring land to the local communities. Thailand's QA and QC procedures are based on our standards that are being developed and formulated in conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), which are currently providing assistance to Thailand's mine clearance operations. Thailand has completed QC procedures of around half of the 2,000 sq. km. safe area. In the meantime, we view that the exchange of experience and expertise among countries conducting this technique should be encouraged.

- Progress on mine clearance has been gradual due to many remaining challenges facing Thailand, especially the effects of the global economic crisis, which has, in turn, affected national operations. Despite such difficulties, TMAC is committed to fulfill the mine clearance work plan. It is currently working in close cooperation with some international organizations such as UNDP and NPA to enhance its capacities. TMAC continues to seek for further cooperation in this area.

- Thailand appreciates the European Commission's proposal to provide assistance on mine clearance near the border between Thailand and Cambodia. Thailand is ready to cooperate with her neighbouring countries especially in terms of the exchange of technical experience and on victim assistance.