

Statement of the Delegation of Thailand
By Lt. Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan
Director-General of Thailand Mine Action Center
Agenda item 7: Review of the operation and status of the Convention
Clearing mined areas
27 November 2019

(Slide 1 : Opening Slide)

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to convey through you, Mr. President, our sincere appreciation to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for their continued cooperation and support to Thailand's mine-clearance works.

(Slide 2: Remaining Challenges)

Mr. President,

Today, I have the honour to share with the Conference, the status and progress of Thailand's mine-clearance efforts.

For the past 20 years, the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) has put its utmost effort to landmines clearance operation and to release safe land back to our people. We fully commit to the obligations under the Convention with an aim to achieve mine-free Thailand by 2023.

At the 16th Meeting of State Parties in Vienna, Thailand was granted the second extension to our mine-clearance deadline, which allows us until 31 October 2023 to fulfill this obligation.

As of 31 October 2019, Thailand has 172 Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHA) and 82 Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) with total area of 218 million sq.m., awaiting demining and releasing. The progress is in line with the updated work plan on Article 5, which was submitted to the ISU in April 2019.

(Slide 3: Overview of Thailand's Five-Year Plan)

Thailand has developed a Five-Year plan as a roadmap to meet our clearance obligations. The plan can be divided into two phases. During the first phase, from 2019 to 2020, our works will focus on conducting the Non-Technical Survey (NTS). This is to obtain precise information on mine contaminated areas, which will enable us to effectively release contaminated areas. While during the second phase, from 2021 to 2023, our operation will focus on Technical Survey and Clearance, based on information gained from NTS.

During the Intersessional Meetings in May 2019, Thailand projected to release around 120 million sq.m. of land in 2019. I am pleased to inform the Conference that from 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019, we went beyond our target by releasing, mostly through cancellation, 142 million sq.m. of contaminated land. In 2020, Thailand plans to further release 149 million sq.m. of the contaminated land.

(Slide 4: Summary of Progress Made)

Mr. President,

We have set an ambitious goal to become mine-free by 2023 and our determination to accomplish the goal remains unwavering. With 142 million sq.m. of land released and returned to our people this year, Thailand is now left with 172 SHAs or approximately 203 million sq.m. and 82 CHAs or 14.5 million sq.m to be released.

(Slide 5: Challenges I – Insufficient Mine Contamination Information)

Although the significant progress achieved this year has moved us closer towards the completion of our clearance work, challenges remain and many important issues need to be appropriately addressed. Insufficient information regarding the exact contaminated areas and its condition poses risks to the deminers, while causing delays to the clearance operation. Therefore, Thailand is focusing our works on both NTS and TS to gain necessary information in order to carry out the tasks safely and on schedule.

(Slide 6: Challenges – Rough Geographical Conditions)

Rough terrains and extreme geographical conditions create access and mobility difficulties to deminers. We are currently working to ensure that the demining personnel have all necessary equipment and technology for their operations.

(Slide 7: Challenges – Sensitive Mine Contaminated Area along the Border)

At present, the majority of the remaining contaminated areas are along the border between Thailand and its neighbouring countries. Thailand is working closely with its neighbours to facilitate and expedite our mine clearance operation.

(Slide 8: Additional Desired Support)

Thailand believes that assistance, both in terms of knowledge sharing and technical support, significantly contributes to the effective mine-clearance operation and in the realization of the mine-free goal. We would therefore appreciate the assistance from the State Parties and partners, especially in the procurement of equipment necessary to access the areas with rough terrain and extreme geographical conditions.

(Slide 9: Final Slide)

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to extend Thailand's appreciation to the Government of Japan, Norway, and the United States of America for their continued support to our demining operation as well as Cambodia for their continued cooperation.

In closing, let me reiterate once again Thailand's commitment to the Convention and our full support for the work of the convention.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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Thailand Mine action center

Progress for Thailand's Five-Year Plan



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Remaining Challenge

LANDMINE FREE THAILAND 2023



- Previous deadline: 31 Oct 2018
- As of October 2019, there were 172 SHAs and 82 CHAs or 218,194,245 m²**
- 87,633 people in 108 villages, 9 provinces are affected.
- Request for extension for a period of 5 years until 31 Oct 2023

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Overview of Thailand's Five-Year Plan (2019-2023)				LANDMINE FREE THAILAND 2023
Operational Framework 2019 – 2020 (NTS Focus)				
Year	Area Surveyed (m ²)	Projected Cancellation (m ²)	Actual Result (m ²)	CHAs Found (m ²)
2019	156,681,792	120,847,688	142,132,159	14,549,633
Year	Area to be Surveyed (m ²)	Projected Cancellation (m ²)	Actual Result (m ²)	CHAs Found (m ²)
2020	203,319,576	149,469,296	n/a	n/a
Operational Framework 2021 -2023 (TS/Clr Focus)				
Year	Projected Number of CHAs		Amount of Area (m ²)	
2021	53		21,159,793	
2022	64		24,555,435	
2023	86		22,684,685	
Total	203		68,399,913	


Summary of Progress made		LANDMINE FREE THAILAND 2023
Mine Contamination (Since 31 Oct 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 254 mine contaminated areas ➤ 360,001,368 m² 	
Progress made (1 Nov 2018 - 31 Oct 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 82 SHAs or 142,132,159 m² released ➤ 128,295,034 m² cancelled through NTS ➤ 13,741,847 m² reduced through TS ➤ 95,278 m² Cleared ➤ 7,318 AP Mines destroyed ➤ 1,129 AT Mines/UXOs destroyed 	
Remaining challenge (From 1 Nov 2019 onward)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Total = 218,194,245 m² ➤ 172 SHAs = 203,644,612 m² ➤ 82 CHAs = 14,549,633 m² 	

 **Challenge : Insufficient Mine Contamination Information**


Action Taken : Focused Effort on NTS and TS



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 **Challenge : Rough Geography Condition**

Action Taken : Procure additional field and trekking equipment to increase mobility and sustain the field operations.





Challenge : Sensitive Mine Contaminated Area Along the Border



Thailand - Cambodia



Thailand - Lao



Action Taken : Continue dialogue with neighboring countries



Additional Desired Support

Necessary Support

- Additional Survey Team to assist the survey effort.
- Equipment to traverse the area with rough terrain, speed up the work, and to sustain personnel in the field.

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THAILAND MINE ACTION CENTER

LANDMINE FREE THAILAND 2023