Lao PDR

National implementation measures

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Lao Delegation, I would like, on behalf of the Lao Delegation, to express our appreciation to New Zealand, as Friend of the President on National Implementation Measures, for its tireless efforts in coordinating this matter since the preparation period of the 1MSP.

Allow me also to share with you some information on national implementation measures as required by Article 9 of the Convention. At the present time, the Lao PDR has a number of legal texts in place regulating the UXO Sector activities, on the one hand, and imposing penal sanctions on the other hand.

With regard to Regulatory texts of the UXO/Mine Action Sector, we have (by chronological order):

1. A Government Decree, in 1996, establishing the Lao National UXO Programme (UXO Lao);
2. The Resolutions of the Lao PDR Government, in 2004, adopting the National Strategic Plan for the UXO Programme 2003-2013, called “The Safe Path Forward”; the Strategy has been revised in 2009 to take account of the new circumstances and make it relevant and appropriate in today’s context. The revised Strategy, “The safe Path Forward II” 2011-2020, offers a clear long-term vision for the Sector, as well as a strategic goal to be achieved by 2020. What it suggests is a compact between the Government and Development Partners over the coming 10 years. Under this compact, the Government will strengthen its leadership and ownership of the UXO issue, and develop a sustainable national capacity fully integrated into its regular institutional set-up by 2020. Development Partners on the other end will endeavour to provide increased and coordinated international assistance over the 10-year period in order to help meet the objectives of the Oslo Convention and the Strategy.
3. A **Government Decree**, in 2004, establishing the **National Regulatory Authority** (NRA) for the UXO Programme in Lao PDR\(^1\), under the Chairmanship of a Deputy-Prime Minister. This Decree has been amended on 09 June 2011, increasing the number of the Committee’s members from 9 to 17. The NRA has been given the mandate to **control**, **coordinate** and **regulate** the UXO/Mine action;

4. A **Government Decision**, in 2005, on the **Organization and Activities** of the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) for UXO/Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR;

5. The **National UXO/Mine Action Standards** (NS), adopted by the NRA Board in 2007. The purpose of the NS is to ensure safety, efficiency and effectiveness in UXO/Mine Action within Lao PDR. They deal with the **accreditation of UXO/mine action organizations**, the **prioritization and planning for UXO/mine action tasks**, the **conduct of UXO/mine action activities**, the **handover of released land**, quality management requirements, the **training and qualification of UXO/mine action personnel**, the **management of UXO/mine action information**, the **health and safety of UXO/mine personnel**, **environmental considerations**, and **supporting logistic activities**, etc. The NS detail the minimum standards and requirements for all UXO/mine action conducted in the country; they conform to the requirements of relevant **Lao national legislation** and the **International Mine Action Standards** (IMAS), and have been developed in a participatory manner with assistance and input from the UXO/mine action community in Lao PDR. They are applicable to all **UXO/mine action organizations** operating in the country; these organizations are to use the NS as the basis for the development of their projects and **Standard Operating Procedures** (SOPs). Any current SOPs that do not conform to the requirements in the NS are to be amended accordingly.


7. The **Lao PDR specific MDG 9** on the **reduction of UXO impacts** by 2020, adopted by the Vientiane High Level Round Table Meeting, on 20 October 2010.

**With regard to Penal Sanctions**, we have only some articles of the **Penal Code** dealing, not with cluster munitions particularly, but with **war weapons** and **explosives**, such as:

**Illegal Production, Possession** and **Use** of war weapons and explosives;

**Illegal Trade** of war weapons and explosives;

**Robbery, Embezzlement** and **Looting** of war weapons and explosives.

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\(^1\) The NRA is an Inter-ministerial Committee, including 9 line ministries (the NRA Board); the amended Decree has increased this number to 17.
Now that Lao PDR is a Party to the Convention, it is expected that the Penal Code will be amended accordingly to reflect the obligations under Article 9 of the Convention.

Moreover, since the UXO problem is a long-term and cross-cutting issue, and the UXO/Mine Action Sector is one of the Government priorities, a comprehensive legislation for the Sector is needed. To that end, during the past years, the NRA has taken some initiatives with concerned Ministries, particularly with the Prime Minister Office and the Ministry of Justice to start the process in the near future, probably during 2012.

Thank you for your attention.