



CAMBODIA'S STATEMENT AT
THE 2nd MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

BEIRUT, REPUBLIC OF LEBANON, 12 – 16 SEPTEMBER, 2011

Mr. President; Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;
Distinguished Delegates;

On behalf of the Cambodian Delegation let me first, congratulate you and your colleagues for the quality of the organization of this second meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and I am also thankful for the warm hospitality. I also would like to thank Lao PDR for its excellent leadership during the presidency of the 1MSP to the CCM.

Cambodia is known to be contaminated by cluster munitions remnants as a result of the US war in Indochina in the 1970s and the recent conflict with a neighbor country. Despite the fact that Cambodia has not yet signed the Convention, Cambodia has already been working and addressing many important aspects of the Convention as we now speak. Let me report to you about progress made by Cambodia in removing this threat, as well as the greater one posed by landmines and other explosive remnants of war. Cambodia during the past years has made tremendous progress on many fronts such as mine/CM/ERW/ survey, marking and clearance, victim assistance, research and development of new technologies, Risk Education, Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action as well as in the provision of technical cooperation and assistance. Since 1992 up to July 2011, a total of 695,568,236 square meters have been cleared, and 918,440 APM; 21,327 ATM and 2,144,093 ERW/CM items were found and destroyed. The National Mine action Strategy 2010-2019 (NMAS) that our Government approved late 2010 is an inclusive strategy that also encompasses cluster munitions. Our efforts in implementing the NMAS also do cover the cluster munitions which are part of the explosive remnants of war.

Since August 2009 as part of efforts to comply with the APMBBC, Cambodia started a new approach to survey (so called Baseline Survey) to identify and record all remaining mine/CM/ERW/ suspected areas. The first phase covering the 21 most affected districts was completed last year. As a result, 8,514 polygons have been captured totaling 608,240,511 M² of contaminated land. We are now conducting another 41 districts in 2011 and then we will move to the last 60 districts in 2012. The BLS will capture all remaining contaminated areas and classify land according to the type of threat. A specific land classification exists for areas

contaminated by cluster munitions. To ensure better results and optimize our efforts, CMAA plan to visit Laos PDR in the coming months to learn and share experiences on survey methodology with the Laos Authority, especially for the survey of ERW/CM contaminated areas.

In Cambodia, significant reduction in the number of casualties has been achieved from 4,320 victims in 1996 to 286 casualties last year. This substantial achievement is the result of collective efforts, the continued clearance and risk education. Moreover, the enforcement of the law by way of putting relevant measures to scrap metal dealers by all police network is also contributing to this achievement.

Despite the unwavering efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia and its long term partners, ERW continue to kill and injure civilians, deny access to productive land and create fear in the mind of Cambodian people living in contaminated areas. We continue to work, day by day, to bring safety and prosperity for those who have been, or might one day be victims of these inhumane weapons.

As one of the pioneers of the movement to ban cluster munitions, Cambodia remains fully committed to the humanitarian and legal principles of the CCM. Cambodia is still assessing the impact of signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions on its defense capability and the ability to comply with all obligations. In the meantime, we stand by the goals of the Convention. Cambodia's refrain from the deployment of cluster munitions during her recent armed conflicts with her neighboring country is a testimony of her conviction. We want a peaceful world and do not believe in the use of force and weapons as means to resolve conflict. We are pleased to report that effort to come up with a decision has been made at the highest level of our Government. To that extend, Cambodia is making every effort to identify areas contaminated by CM, and clear them according to community based priority-setting mechanisms, educate the mine/CM/ERW/ affected communities about the risks and assist the victims. We sincerely hope that the ultimate signing is just being a matter of time. Cambodia is also looking at expanding its works and looks forwards to cooperate closely with neighboring countries to meet relevant obligations stipulated in the Convention. Let me conclude by thanking the Australian Government who last month sent its high level military experts to share experiences with the Ministry of National Defense which allowed the latter understood more about the Convention as well as the consequences when the country acceding to it. I also thank all partners with whom we have worked over the years for their continuing support to help reduce the painful and persistent legacies of the conflicts that inhibited Cambodia.

I thank you!