



CAMBODIA'S STATEMENT AT
THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 16 – 19 APRIL, 2012

Session on Clearance and Risk Reduction

Mr. Chair; 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 the Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and of this session on Clearance and Risk Reduction.

And thanks for the opportunity to speak.

Cambodia is known to be contaminated by cluster munitions remnants as a result of the US war in Indochina in the 1965 to 1975 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 Remnants of War Action as well as in the provision of technical cooperation and assistance. Since 1992 up to 31 December 2011, a total of 775,800,683 square meters have been cleared, and 930,571 APM; 21,570 ATM and 2,183,957 ERW items (including CMR) were found and destroyed. The National Mine Action Strategy 2010-2019 (NMAS) that our Government approved in 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.

Elaboration a bit on Cambodia's Land Release:

Why?	What?	How?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accelerate the release of land in support of Extension Request targets • To increase the release of land in support of development • To use resources more efficiently onto hazard areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of reclassifying the status of known or suspected war remnant areas to end state land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land is released from the suspicion of mines/ERW through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Non-Technical Survey 2- Technical Survey 3- Clearance

Since August 2009 as part of efforts to comply with the APMBC, Cambodia started and almost complete a new approach to survey (so called Baseline Survey) to identify and record all remaining mine/CM/ERW suspected areas. Up to now the Cambodia has already complete 65 districts out of the 122 districts we planned to conduct this Baseline Survey. As a result, 1,848 polygons have been captured totaling 1,104,908 sq. meter of contaminated land. We are now conducting another 57 districts in 2012. In this 57 remaining districts we have budget through the Clearing for Result Project only 36 districts and there is 21 remained unfunded. 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 wish to visit Laos PDR 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 211 casualties in 2011. This substantial risk reduction 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 local authority network is also significantly contributing to this achievement.

FYI: With the support from the UNICEF, Cambodia is now in the process of developing a **new concept paper of Risk Education**. The new RE concept paper will provide an overall picture of RE activities in Cambodia and highlight the strengths and also the challenges to be addressed in terms of the current trends of risk and accidents. It will consider the changing environment in Cambodia and what are now the main causes of accidents and how these can be better addressed through RE interventions, building on the experience and best practice of the RE operators. The paper will consider the central level coordination mechanisms for RE and how these can be developed in the coming years, and also the potential to better integrate RE activities into sub-national structures and bodies to ensure better sustainability of risk education in the future. The concept will approach the issue of RE from a rights-based perspective. The concept paper, I hope, will be available for distribution by the end of this year.

Despite the unwavering efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia and its long term partners, this War Remnants 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 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 year 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.

Thank you!