

**Intervention by Thailand**  
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**Session : Assisting the Victims**  
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**Mr. Chairman,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Distinguished Guests,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you for giving me the floor to share Thailand's view on the issue of victim assistance.

First of all, I wish to reaffirm that humanitarianism is a core of Thailand's commitment to the obligations under the Mine Ban Convention. It is indeed our humanitarian spirit which prompted Thailand to join the Convention 12 years ago. Over the past 10 years since the Convention entered into force, Thailand is deeply committed to her obligations in stockpile destruction, demining operations and victim assistance. However, in any circumstance and whether or not for the Convention, the Royal Thai Government's efforts in enhancing the national capacity in the assistance to persons with disabilities, including landmine victims, have always been and will remain a great challenge.

As one of the 26 State Parties identified with a significant numbers of landmine victims, and as the Co-chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration alongside Belgium, we wish to share some of our viewpoints, based on our past performances, on the challenges that need to be further elaborated towards the Second Review Conference and beyond.

1. We found that the Nairobi Action Plan on victim assistance, with six thematic areas namely, (1) understanding the extent of the challenge faced (2) emergency and continuing medical care (3) physical rehabilitation (4) psychological support and social reintegration (5) economic reintegration and (6) legislation and public policies, is a very useful guide for the State Parties to examine and improve their policy and programmes on victim assistance. We believe that even after it expires in 2009, it is still relevant and should continue to facilitate the State Parties in enhancing their efforts in this regard.

2. To begin the next chapter of the Convention after the Second Review Conference, it is an opportune time for us to re-examine the purpose of maintaining or expanding the list of the State Parties that have significant numbers of landmine victims, or the so-called 'VA 26', for the next 5 years. The compilation and update of the VA26 list alone will not help the survivors. We need to think about what to do

with this list. For example, how can other State Parties further support or assist these 26 State Parties to fulfill their task? How can we follow up the situation in each country with an appropriate approach? Will we be able to create commonly accepted indicators to measure the progress or achievement?

3. Talking about indicators, they should be carefully designed to capture the true determination of the State Parties in victim assistance, as well as the real progress made and the quality of the assistance provided over and above the quantitative statistics of victims assisted. Such indicators should take into account the national capacity to deliver victim assistance, the proportion of landmine survivors to other categories of people with disabilities and the total population, the integration of victim assistance with other programmes for the disabled, the relevant laws and regulations, and other obligations for people with disabilities.

At this juncture, I also wish to share briefly the progress that Thailand has made in victim assistance up till now.

1. Over the years, Thailand has raised greater awareness and developed closer coordination among government agencies, civil society, and private corporations. The policy and implementation of victim assistance programmes are integrated and coordinated through the Master Plan for Mine Victim Assistance 2007-2011 and the National Sub-Committee on Victim Assistance, comprising the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and relevant NGOs.

2. The key turning point in our implementation is the outcome of the Project on Mine Victim Survey and Situation Analysis which is the collaboration of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Handicap International (Thailand) and other NGOs active in mine victim assistance. As a result, a database on landmine survivors has been established, currently with 1,252 persons identified as of March 2009. The database will enable the National Sub-Committee on Victim Assistance and implementing agencies to reassess and improve their programmes so that they can better meet the needs of survivors.

3. Another major accomplishment is the enhancement of our emergency medical services system and physical rehabilitation services. Today, these services are available in all provinces, including local communities. A comprehensive network of emergency response teams is now in place at different levels nationwide. The emergency hotline service (or 1669) is now fully functioning and easily accessible, perhaps with the exception of very remote communities along the Thai borders.

To date, all landmine survivors could get prosthetics at their local hospitals free of charge, as well as from the mobile units which provide regular service at various local communities. In this regard, Thailand is proud of the dedication and

effort of Dr. Therdchai Jivacate, Secretary-General of the Prostheses Foundation, who was presented the Ramon Magsaysay Award for the international recognition of public services. Additionally, the landmine survivors in our neighbouring countries also benefit from his devotion and generous prosthetic service. In fact, some of the victim assistance experts had the first hand opportunity to visit the Prostheses Foundation in Chiang Mai and to see the real action on the ground.

4. Legislation and public policy is another area that Thailand has made remarkable accomplishment in all key aspects necessary for the support of persons with disabilities in term of socio-economic reintegration. The recently enacted 2007 Persons with Disabilities Empowerment Act is an enhanced version of our 1991 Rehabilitation Act, drafted in strict conformity with the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which Thailand is a State Party. With a clear set of legal framework in place, we will continue to improve our victim assistance programmes.

Before concluding my intervention, I wish to reaffirm that Thailand is pleased to further share our experiences and lessons learned on assisting mine victims, and stands ready to cooperate with interested States Parties in this area. As a Co-Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, we also hope to see vigorous and interactive exchange of views on this matter, which would help provide more constructive inputs for the Second Review Conference in November 2009.

Thank you.