

**Comments on Thailand's Mine Clearance Deadline Extension Request
Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty
18 December 2017**



We thank Thailand for following up thoroughly on the calls for additional information made at the intersessional meeting. The revised request has significantly improved on two fronts. First, explanations were added on “who will work where, and when” during the extension period. Second, there is now more information on the process for areas to be demarcated, at the border with Cambodia and elsewhere.

There are numerous other positive points. For instance:

- We find detailed information on the results achieved during the first extension period and the remaining extent of contamination.
- The results of the land release pilot project have been used to estimate how much of the remaining suspected hazardous areas are actually contaminated.
- Thailand has described the measures it is putting in place to improve its non-technical survey capacity.
- A National Committee for Mine Action was established in May this year, chaired by the Prime Minister. This should bring an increased national focus to mine action.
- Thailand will cover 85% of the cost of its mine clearance program in 2017-2018, which places the country among the world's top contributors to their own national programs.

We put forward the following expectations for the extension period:

- As Thailand expects to cancel large areas of suspected contamination, it would be useful if it provided updated work plans on a regular basis, taking into account the improved data on the extent of remaining contamination.
- The national mine action standards are being updated to be in line with the IMAS. This is to be finalized during Phase 2 of the extension period – but we suggest that this be completed at the earliest possible date in order to promptly start making use of best practices on land release.
- And lastly, we draw your attention to a crucial component of the request: there is a plan to facilitate clearance in border areas, in particular at the border with Cambodia. We very much look forward to hearing about progress made by the Joint Border Commission and other partners involved in finding urgent solutions for clearance at the border. This can no longer be delayed.