

**ANNUAL BULLETIN**



# ***Development of ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center***

*Volume 03 : January 2019 - June 2020*







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# Composition of the Steering Committee of ARMAC 2020

## CHAIRMAN OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

### VIETNAM



**Mr. Lai Xuan Chien**

Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in Phnom Penh (As Alternate)

**H.E. Vu Quang Minh**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the Kingdom of Cambodia (As Representative)

## VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

### CAMBODIA



**H.E. Mr. Kan Pharidh**

Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and ASEAN SOM Leader of Cambodia (As Representative)

**H.E. Mr. Sim Vireak**

Director-General, ASEAN-Cambodia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (As Alternate)

### BRUNEI DARUSSALAM



**Colonel Mohamad Huzaimi Husin**

Royal Brunei Armed Forces, Brunei Darussalam (as Representative)

**Mr. Kelvin Ng Tien Loong**

Second Secretary, Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Phnom Penh (As Alternate)

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### THAILAND



**H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of Cambodia (As Representative)

**Lieutenant General Sittipol Nimnuan**

Director-General, Thailand Mine Action Centre (As Alternate)



## STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### INDONESIA



**H.E. Mr. Sudiman Haseng**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to the Kingdom of Cambodia

### LAO PDR



**H.E. Mr. Amphay Kindavong**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Kingdom of Cambodia

**Colonel Hazmi bin Abd Hamid**

Defence Attaché, Embassy of Malaysia in Phnom Penh (As Representative)

### MALAYSIA



**Mrs. Nora Azlinda Jaapar**

First Secretary, Embassy of Malaysia in Phnom Penh (As Alternate)

### MYANMAR



**Lieutenant Colonel Win Win**

Staff Officer (1), Directorate of Military Engineers, Ministry of Defence, Republic of the Union of Myanmar (As Representative)

**Mr. Nyan Myint Aung**

Director, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Republic of the Union of Myanmar (As Alternate)

### PHILLIPINES



**BGEN Fernando V Felipe**

Commander, Armed Forces of the Philippines Munitions Control Center (AFPMCC), Republic of the Philippines

### SINGAPORE



**H.E. Mr. Michael Tan**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Singapore to the Kingdom of Cambodia (As representative)

**Mr. Timothy Fang**

Second Secretary (Political) , Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in Phnom Penh (As Alternate)



# About **ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC)**

Established by the ASEAN Leaders at the 21st ASEAN Summit in 2012, ARMAC has the mandate and function to (1): Enhance awareness programmes on the dangers of ERW among affected communities; (2): Facilitate appropriate medical and rehabilitation assistance for victims of ERW, upon request from the affected AMS; and (3): Assist interested AMS in research and knowledge sharing on the effects of ERW and efforts to address them, including through writing proposals for technical assistance projects and funding, at their specific and individual request.

As the following milestones highlight, 2019 was a particularly productive year for ARMAC as the center worked towards expanding its visibility, partner networks and mine/ERW action programs. With the Work Plan 2019-2021, ARMAC's efforts in 2019 have enhanced regional capacity in certain areas of mine/ERW action, strengthened the level of regional cooperation, fostered increased dialogue between mine/ERW action stakeholders, which firmly laid the ground work for ARMAC's future programmes.

Since the start of ARMAC's formal operation in 2018, building sustained and beneficial relationships with partners has remained a core focus for the center. These relationships have not only supported ARMAC in carrying out its mission, but have also helped to raise public awareness about ARMAC and its work.

In 2019, ARMAC set out to take on a more structured approach towards partner engagement by increasing both the frequency and diversity of its communication. The largest change to ARMAC's media line-up was the launch of a new E-Newsletter covering the center's recent activities and upcoming projects.

Beyond digital and media engagement, ARMAC also continued to deepen its ties with current and new partners through meetings, courtesy call and events. Over the year, ARMAC has met with various stakeholders including national governments, embassies, international mine/ERW action organisations, research institutes and other partners.

Attending and participating in international mine/ERW actions events was also a core aspect of ARMAC's partner outreach and networking strategy. To this end, ARMAC attended key mine/ERW action and ASEAN community events including the 11th coordinating conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community in Indonesia, the 22nd International Meeting of Mine Action national Directors and United Nations Advisors in Switzerland, the Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and other ASEAN focused events such as the Myanmar National Mine Action Authority Workshop.

## **WORK PLAN 2019-2021**

The Work Plan 2019-2021 is designed to ensure that by the end of 2021, ARMAC will build a credible reputation and put in place significant and sustainable projects/programmes to fulfil its mandate and functions. To date ARMAC has achieved over its target for programme activities in 2019, with the center having successfully completed or implemented 38 activities compared to its annual target of 35.

On an annual, basis, as an accredited ASEAN entity, ARMAC will also report to the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting through ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC).



## Japan Continues to Provide Assistance on Demining Sector



Witnessing a signing ceremony in Tokyo on 31 May 2019, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia urged Japan to continue assisting on demining sector in Cambodia, in particular to provide financial assistance to the Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) to carry out demining activities in three provinces, including Battambang, Pailin, and Pursat, where mines continued to plague development.

Following this high-level bilateral visit, CMAC and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency signed an agreement on 24 December 2019 to continue technical cooperation in demining work for another four years, with the Japanese government providing an additional \$1.7 million for demining operations over the first half of 2020.

According to H.E. Mr. Heng Ratana, Director-General of CMAC, Japan has agreed to fund a CMAC project to boost CMAC's activities from February 2020 to February 2024, including providing specialised and pioneering mine action services on a global scale.

Since 1998, the Japan government has provided about USD170 million to support technical mine action and develop human resources in Cambodia.

Moreover, Japan has provided USD 70 million in grant aid towards demining activities and also offered USD50 million worth of equipment to CMAC since 1992.





# The 9th Meeting of Steering Committee of ARMAC

-- 2 March 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The 9th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) was held on 22 March 2019 at ARMAC's Headquarter in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC. The Meeting was also attended by members of the Steering Committee composed of delegates from all ten ASEAN Member States, and the Executive Director of ARMAC.

The Meeting was the first Steering Committee to be held in 2019 and the Meeting discussed ARMAC's priorities and programmes for 2019 as outlined in ARMAC's recently developed three year work plan. The Meeting also endorsed the Victim Assistance/Mine Risks Education related Event in Thailand in collaboration with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which aim to promote the victims assistance and mine risk education in the community. This activity would become the first activities of ARMAC organized outside Cambodia for the first time to raise the public awareness of ARMAC among ASEAN citizens.

Also, highlighted was ARMAC's progress in enhancing its systems and operations including its visibility and partner engagement through the publication of the Annual Report and participation in high level meetings.



# The 10th Meeting of Steering Committee of ARMAC

-- 12 June 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The 10th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) was convened on 12 June 2019 at ARMAC's Headquarter in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC. The Meeting was also attended by all ten ASEAN Member States and the Executive Director of ARMAC.

The Meeting reviewed ARMAC's current progress in implementing its three-year work plan, particularly noted the successful organising ARMAC's International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, the recently initiated mine risk education project, funded by the Government of Japan through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and several other upcoming projects.

The Meeting also discussed activities/projects to be implemented in 2019 namely: (1) Enhance awareness programme on the dangers of Mine/Explosive Remnant of War (ERW) among ASEAN Member States (Mine Risk Education Project); (2) Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States; (3) Victim Assistance/Mine Risk Education related Events in Thailand in collaboration with ICRC; and (4) Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment in ASEAN Mine/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) Action through Regional Workshop.





# The 11th Meeting of Steering Committee of ARMAC

-- 17 December 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

A total of three meetings of the Steering committee of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) was conducted in 2019. The first two Steering Committees were held in March and June, respectively. The last Meeting of Steering Committee, under Thailand's Chairmanship, was the 11th Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 17 December 2019 at ARMAC's Headquarter in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As a traditional practice, the Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC.

The Meeting reviewed ARMAC's current progress in implementing its three-year work plan. In particular, the Meeting noted with appreciation of the successful conclusion of ARMAC's pro-grammes activities 2019 such as regional trainings, workshops and seminars; the current imple- mented mine risk education project funded by the Government of Japan through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF); and several other upcoming projects in 2020.

The Meeting also reviewed the report on the Factual Study on the Role between ARMAC and CMAA an ARMAC and CMAC and found that there is no overlapped scope and activity between these institutions.

At the Meeting, Norwegian People's Aid Myanmar gave a presentation on its engagement and support in mine/explosive remnants of war action programmes in the region./End



*H.E. Mr. Panyarak Poolthup, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC (left), handed over Chairmanship to Viet Nam's ASEAN Chairmanship 2020, presented by H.E. Mr. Vu Quang Minh, Ambassador of Vietnam to Cambodia (right).*



# The 12th Meeting of Steering Committee of ARMAC

-- 6 June 2020 Phnom Penh, Cambodia



On 9 June 2020, the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) organized the 12th Meeting of the Steering Committee of ARMAC via Video Conference. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Vu Quang Minh, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the Kingdom of Cambodia and Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC and attended by representatives of ARMAC's Steering Committee and the Executive Director.

The Meeting noted ARMAC's significant progress, in particular, on the increasing cooperation with the ASEAN Member States, donors and partners. Other key discussion included the Recruitment of the new Executive Director, Friends of ARMAC and financial sustainability of ARMAC.

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit hard on ARMAC's operation and activities since February 2020. Most of the activities/projects have been rescheduled or shifted to online platform. Despite of COVID-19 pandemic disruption, the Meeting also noted the successful organizing Regional Webinar on "Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in ASEAN in a Time of Pandemic" on 19 May 2020 via Video Conference, attended by Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, Australia, Mali, Switzerland and United Kingdom.





# International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action 2019

-- 3-4 April 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

To commemorate the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), with the financial support from the Government of Norway, the Royal Thai Government, the Government of Ireland, and the Clearing for Results Projects, hosted a two-day event focused on “Raising Mine/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) Awareness for Peace, Stability and Resilience in ASEAN through Youth Participation, on 3-4 April 2019 in Phnom Penh.

During the first of the event, 37 students from the ASEAN Member States hold an opportunity to visit a training centre and physical rehabilitation centre, and meet and talk to mine/ERW survivors to learn about the effects of mines/ERW.

On 4 April 2019, close to 400 attendees gathered to mark the 2019 International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. H.E Mr. LY Thuch, Senior Minister and First Vice President of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) delivered a keynote address and toured an exhibition of students' artworks and essays, which were produced as part of their efforts to spread awareness on the impacts of mines/ERW.

Closing out the day, the students were presented with certificates of acknowledgment for their participation and commitment to act as youth ambassadors by sharing mine/ERW information with their peers and youth communities.



# **Japan strengthening Mine Risk Education in ASEAN**

In May 2019, the Government of Japan through the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) provided the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) with an approximate amount of USD 156,000 funding to enhance Mine Risk Education (MRE) in affected ASEAN Member States, including Cambodia.

The funding will go towards supporting a one-year project to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to MRE that will build on the best practices of ASEAN Member States in educating their populations on the dangers of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

Currently, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam are affected by mines/ERW, and ARMAC, through a set of consultative meetings, with the objectives of bringing these countries together to share their knowledge and experiences to build a regional approach to MRE.

The Executive Director of ARMAC, Mr. Ly Panharith, explained that “the fundamental goal of the project will be to establish a platform for ASEAN countries to speak to and learn from one another so that a collaborative community of MRE experts and stakeholders can be established.” Going further, Mr. Panharith said ARMAC would intend “to build upon the already existing successes of MRE in some countries and share these with the broader community so that all ASEAN Member States, and in particular those individuals most at risk, can be educated on how to avoid mines/ERW and what actions to take when encountering them.”

The funding will also support the launch of an MRE magazine, which is designed to spread awareness on mines/ERW by sharing examples of successes, recent innovations and new approaches as well as case studies highlighting current mine action programmes running in affected communities of individual ASEAN Member State.

The last component of the MRE project is the promotion of the 4th of April as a day of celebration to mark the official ASEAN day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. Supporting a ceremony in 2020, the funding will cover an event that brings together government ministries, institutions and organisations involved in the mine/ERW sector to raise awareness on the issue and mobilise resources for mine action in ASEAN.

For its part, the Government of Japan has been a key contributor to mine action in ASEAN for a number of years and has stated that it is committed to “supporting” efforts to address the humanitarian aspects of landmines and explosive remnants of war in the region through Japan’s support in financial and technical assistance, and capacity building.”

The recent provision of fund to ARMAC will go a long way to achieving Japan’s goals to support mine action, and will also directly assist those most vulnerable to mines/ERW in living safe and productive lives in their local communities.





# CMAC still lacks funding to clear UXO

Despite a USD 2 million grant from the U.S Government to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), it still lacks significant amount of funds to clear the remaining unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the Kingdom, said H.E. Senior Minister Ly Thuch at International Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action Day on 4 April 2019 in Phnom Penh.

H.E. Ly Thuch said that plans to clear mines and UXOs had been laid out by the government but still faced challenges due to inadequate funding and the lack of personnel, with some of the current ageing 2,500 demining officers and others unable to work due to health conditions. The most important thing in mine clearing is the budget. The Government spends nearly USD10 million each year, although we have donors from the U.S, Japan, Australia, the UK and other countries, and the UN. It is still not enough.

He further raised that CMAC had asked for a study into the locations of UXOs to enable the team to work in the right places – areas riddled with mines – and reach its goals by 2025.

CMAC has announced that it had signed with the Norwegian People's Aid in Cambodia (NPA) a partnership agreement on a research proposal and the clearing of cluster mines.

The project, over a period of 12 months from March 2019 to February 2020 and with a budget of USD 2 million, aims to clear 2,600 ha of cluster mines, carry out research on 3,200 ha and respond to 2,000 urgent requests. "There are over 73,000 ha of land that we know have cluster bombs but have not been cleared," H.E Senior Minister said.



# Regional Seminar on the Full and Effective Operationalisation of ARMAC

-- 22-23 April 2019, Siem Reap, Cambodia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the support of the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) 2.0, organized the Regional Seminar on the Full and Effective Operationalisation of ARMAC: Enhancing Regional Efforts in Addressing ERW through Integrated Approach, on 22-23 April 2019 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The regional Seminar aimed to promote regional cooperation within ASEAN to fully operationalize the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) as well as enhancing cooperation among relevant regional and international organizations in effectively addressing and eliminating mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the region.

This two-day Seminar covered the discussion on experiences and best practices in addressing mines/ERW in the ASEAN region, the progress and development of ARMAC, the roles of ARMAC in enhancing regional efforts through integrated approach as well as ARMAC's financial sustainability in the recent and upcoming years.

The Regional Seminar also included a field visit to the Cambodian Mine Action Center's – CMAC's training facility and Peace Museum. The demonstration of Mine Detection Rats by APOPO's HeroRATs and Mine Detection Dogs by CMAC were also made during the visit.





# Enhance Awareness Programmes on the dangers of Mine/ERW Among ASEAN Member States

In May 2019, ARMAC began the implementation of the project: Enhance Awareness Programmes on the Dangers of Mine/ERW Among ASEAN Member States, with the financial support from the Government of Japan through its Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). The main objective of this one-year project is to develop an integrated approach to MRE in order to improve mine/ERW education for affected communities in AMS. Based on the good practices of MRE across ASEAN countries, the project sought to integrate MRE with other mine/ERW action and development activities to work towards minimising the number of victims, reducing the socioeconomic impact of mines/ERW, and promoting sustainable development.

The integration of MRE into other activities is also to ensure the coherent and effective involvement of all relevant actors in all aspects of the MRE programme cycle including assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of strategies and activities. In this regard, ARMAC hosted a series of consultative meetings in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam from August to September 2019, which brought MRE stakeholders from these ASEAN countries together to learn about current MRE successes and to share these with one another as well as the broader community. Following these meetings, ARMAC drafted the preliminary results and presented these at a side event during the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, in November 2019, in Oslo, Norway. Moving forward, in 2020 ARMAC will organize a regional consultative meeting to present and discuss the study, as well as gather inputs from the participant.



# ***CMAA to utilise drones for mine clearance***

The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority signed an agreement with a university from England on 9 July 2019 with the aim of utilising drone technology to help clear the Kingdom of unexploded ordnance.

According to a report issued by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, about 45,500 unexploded ordnances and landmines were unearthed from nearly 90 square kilometres and destroyed in 2018. Cambodia is aiming to achieving its vision of a mine-free country by 2025.

H.E. Senior Minister Ly Thuch, Vice-President of the CMAA, welcomed Mr. Darren Ansell, Professor of Aerospace Engineering from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), in order to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the use of drone technology in the acceleration of mine clearance. H.E. Ly Thuch said that utilising drones would reduce the risk of life-threatening incidents among deminers. The UCLAN will provide three drones and three robots in the near future.

H.E. Heng Ratana, Director-General of CMAC, met with Mr. Watanabe Jinchi, representative of Japan International Consultant System (JICS). H.E Ratana said CMAC and JICS signed an agreement to extend an integration project that expired in 2019.

He further explained that the project have provided about USD2.6 million in demining operations and USD220,000 in post-clearance development. With this assistance, CMAC can secure 400 expert deminers for the first six months of this year. CMAC has already scaled down on staff to ensure that this project reaches until the end of the year.





# The Operational Efficiency In Mine Action Training

-- 19-24 August 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) in collaboration with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining – GICHD, and the Government of Ireland, hosted an ASEAN regional training on “Operational Efficiency in Mine Action” held from 19-24 August 2019 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The six-day training course attracted mine action professionals and managers from across the ASEAN Member States with the aim of enhancing participants’ knowledge and skills in order to efficiently plan, implement, monitor, assess and evaluate mine action operations.

To underscore much of the rationale for the training, the GICHD stated that improving operational efficiency in mine action is a fundamental task as “resources for responding to mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination problems are costly, limited and precious.”

The training was opened by H.E. Mr. Ly Thuch, Senior Minister and First Vice President of Cambodian Mine Action Authority, with a remarks that “the training will help provide important information and practical advice to be implemented across the ASEAN region.”

The training sought to provide participants with a foundation of knowledge that they can bring back to their respective countries and mine action programmes so that the overall ASEAN mine action sector can be made both more efficient and effective.



# **Workshop on “Gender Equality and Empowerment in ASEAN Mine/Explosive Remnants Actions**

*-- 21-22 October 2019, Vientiane, Lao PDR*

The Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, in cooperation with the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and the Clearing for Results Project Cambodia, and with the financial support from the Government of Canada through her Mission to ASEAN, launched the Regional Workshop on “Gender Equality and Empowerment in ASEAN Mine/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) Action” which was held on 21-22 October 2019 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The two-day Regional Workshop gathered together all 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS), including those affected and not affected by landmines, unexploded ordinances or ERW, to share their best practices on how to include gender approaches and perspectives into their national mine/ERW activities. The Workshop was designed to enable the participants to analyse their work through a gender and diversity lens, assessing how mine/ERW action projects and programmes are implemented with a consideration of gender aspects, and making sure that the priorities and capabilities of women, men, and youth are highlighted, and their needs are met.

Beyond offering participants the capacity building on gender mainstreaming in mine/ERW action (including some other relevant activities), the Regional Workshop also provided a platform for ASEAN countries to share their experiences, best practices and lessons learnt on integrating gender into their works.





# Multi-stakeholder Workshop on establishing a National Mine Action Authority in Myanmar

-- 30 October 2019, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Organized by Switzerland, New Zealand and the Danish Refugee Council/Danish Demining Group in collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of Myanmar, held on 30 October 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw in Myanmar, the multi-takeholder Workshop, provided a chance for mine action stakeholders to discuss the best possible approaches and strategies for establishing a national mine action authority in Myanmar.

The Workshop was also attended by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and national ministry representatives from the Myanmar's Social Welfare, Defence, Police and General Administration departments who provided guidance on policies, legal frameworks and strategies that could support a mine action sector in the country.

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) also participated in the Workshop. ARMAC highlighted that upon its role as regional mine action center for ASEAN, ARMAC stands ready to assist the Government of Myanmar on this important initiative.



## ***Integrated Approaches to Mine Risk Education for Affected Communities in ASEAN Member States: The Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention***

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) hosted a side event on “Integrated Approaches to Mine Risk Education (MRE) for Affected Communities in ASEAN Member States” during the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, held on 25-29 November 2019 in Oslo, Norway. The Conference was attended by more than 600 mine action stakeholders from across the globe.

During the Review Conference, Ms. Asako Omi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, extended commitment of the Government of Japan to support mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) affected communities and announced that, “the Government of Japan has allocated more than USD 800 million since 1998 to support mine action, including mine clearance, MRE, victim assistance and socio-economic integration activities. MRE remains one of our priorities of support, and the Government of Japan calls for an acceleration of efforts including through enhancing innovation and effectiveness.”

Representing ARMAC, Mr. Hal Judge, ARMAC MRE expert, presented the preliminary results of ARMAC’s research and consultation, including: the scope and complexity of MRE/ERW impacts, the results from consultations with over 150 stakeholders in the five countries, risk analysis, and the many advantages of integrating MRE through reinforcing activities and programs in the ASEAN region.

Panelists reiterated the importance of sharing MRE best practices with, Mr. Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, Director of the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Agency, emphasizing the need for both qualitative and quantitative evaluations of MRE and the exchange of research results. Further, both Mr. Yosufi and Ms. Martha Isabel Hurtado Granada, Coordinator, Grupo de Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal, Colombia, also conveyed that MRE should be targeted to the most vulnerable communities, and may be adapted to specific groups at-risk.





# Training on “Risk Management in Mine Action”

-- 02-06 December 2019, Thailand

For the second time in 2019 the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), in collaboration with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), organised a Regional Training for ASEAN mine action stakeholders.

Funded by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Government of Ireland and in partnership with the Thailand Mine Action Centre, the training brought together participants from the five mine and explosive remnants of war affected ASEAN Member States to explore and learn about the different aspects of practical risk management in relation to mine action.

Speaking at the opening ceremony H.E. General Paripat Phalasin, Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff from the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, remarked that the training would help to strengthen capacity in the region and build closer ties within the mine action ASEAN community.

During the five days training, the participants was engaged in participatory exercises and lectures as they improved their current risk management approaches by not only increasing awareness of the risks involved in field operations, but also learned how to actively manage those risks through simple yet effective tools.

Looking towards the future, ARMAC hoped to organise other trainings on a diversity of mine action topics and would continue to strive towards a supporting an effective and efficient mine action sector.



# Workshop on ARMAC's Roles toward a Mine-Free Cambodia 2025

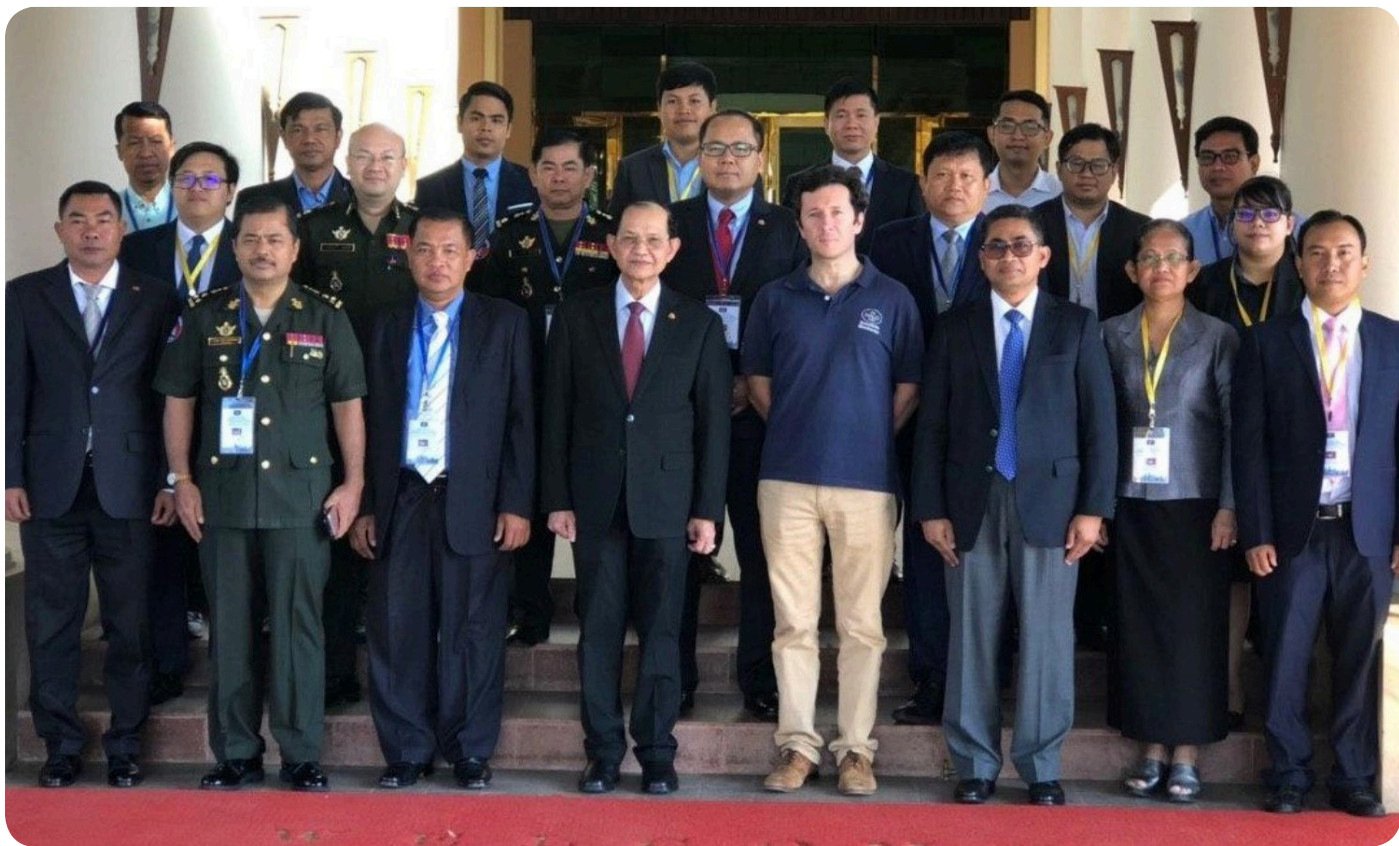
-- 12 December 2019, Siem Reap, Cambodia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia organized a Workshop on ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC)'s Roles toward a Mine-Free Cambodia 2025 on 12 December 2019 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

The Workshop stressed the importance of ARMAC's closer cooperation and engagement within ASEAN Member States and with various national authorities including CMAA and CMAC, and other stakeholders to discuss key priorities and funding to ensure the mine action activities and development.

The Workshop shared the view that ARMAC could contribute to the goal of Mine-Free Cambodia 2025 by designing and implementing comprehensive trainings/workshops and meetings in the region with the focus on mine risk education, victim assistance, and regional cooperation and resource mobilization capacity for mine action in ASEAN through an annual ASEAN Mine/ERW Action High-Level Meeting.

The Workshop adopted a number of recommendations, among others, for the relevant ministries/institutions to continue providing advice and assistance to national authorities/operators in the form of the effective management and coordination of Threat Mitigation policies and procedures with the coordination from the ARMAC.





# **CMAA Seeks 2,000 Soldiers to Participate in Mine-clearance**

The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) is seeking 2,000 army personnel to engage in demining so that Cambodia can achieve its mine-free goal by 2025.

Speaking at a landmine conference in Phnom Penh on 19 December 2019, CMAA's first Vice President Ly Thuch said that the Kingdom is aiming to clear areas littered with landmines by 2025 and needs to engage 2,000 soldiers into its demining contingents.

"We projected an overall budget, including for other risks in the total amount of USD377 million," H.E. Ly Thuch said. "If the required funds are attainable and the Royal Cambodian Army is fully involved in the humanitarian demining as we intended, the 2025 mine-free target is a dream comes true." About 1,900 square kilometres of land have been cleared of mines, but another 2,000 square kilometres of land still needs to be cleared.

Nick Beresford, the UNDP resident Representative, raised in the meeting between government officials and representatives of donors, embassies, and local and international organisations that donors and development partners were committed to help fund mine clearance.

"There has been tremendous progress on mine clearance, but we still have lots of work to carry out," he said. "We have a very strong commitment from development partners, so I think that we together with CMAA, and the development partners can put together a new programme for 2020 to 2025; at the moment its budget is about USD20 million but that might go up."

According to the CMAA report, 71 victims of mines and UXOs were recorded from January until October in which 11 people were killed, 47 injured and 13 amputated.



# **UK Minister for Asia and the Pacific Praises Cambodia's Development**

The Minister for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Heelther Wheeler MP, highly praised Cambodia's rapid development under the wise leadership of Samdach Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Her statement was made on 24 December 2019 during a tea meeting with First Vice President of Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) Ly Thuch. The UK Minister also expressed satisfaction with mine clearance activities and the removal of explosive remnants of war in Cambodia.

H.E. Senior Minister Ly Thuch thanked the UK Government and People for their support in Cambodia in the field of mine actions from 1992 until today. He stated that the assistance has been contributing greatly to saving the lives of Cambodian people and promoting their quality of livings. He also requested the UK to continue assisting in moving toward a mine free kingdom by 2025, in line with the implementation of National Strategic Plan for Mine Action 2018-2025. In response, Her Excellency Healther Wheeler accepted the proposal.





# **Workshop on Cambodia and ARMAC: Implementing the Work Plan 2019-2021 for Effective Operationalization of ARMAC**

*-- 10-11 March 2020*

The Workshop on Cambodia and ARMAC: Implementing the Work Plan 2019-2021 for Effective Operationalization of ARMAC was held on 10-11 March 2020 in Phnom Penh. The Workshop was attended by the representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, (MFAIC), Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA), Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) plus the participants from ARMAC, Mine Action Advisory (MAG), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). The Workshop was organized by MFA.IC in order to promote best efforts in implementation of work plan to tackle the challenges of landmines and ERW through reduce Mine/ERW casualties and other negative impacts.

The Workshop noted that the utilization of the smart devices (demining machine) and technologies in mine action/clearance is an effective approach to conduct demining activities in the most affected area. Using demining machine for mine clearance helps human deminers to safely carry out their demining activities and save lives of the people.

CMAA informed the Workshop that there are 2,060 km<sup>2</sup> of contaminated area in Cambodia which consists of ERW 525 km<sup>2</sup> (25%); Cluster Munition 716 km<sup>2</sup> (35%) and Mine 819 km<sup>2</sup> (40%). To realize a mine-free Cambodia by 2025, Cambodia needs a total funding of 377 million USD for mine clearance.

A representative of Mine Advisory Group (MAG) reported the Workshop that MAG has used integrated approaches in conducting demining activities in Cambodia. One of those integrated approaches is using drones to collect imagery in contaminated areas, which allows the desk top analysis to determine: (1) areas for possible cancellation; (2) operational planning; and (3) topography and vegetation density.

The Workshop also produced some recommendations as follows:

1. To promote the awareness of the danger of mine and ERW, which would contribute to reduction of annual casualty in affected AMS including Cambodia;
2. To develop resources mobilization plan in support of the work plan (2019-2021) implementation;
3. To deepen relations with existing donors and diversify donor base to gain additional support for the mine awareness and research in mine action;
4. To continue its engagement with ASEAN's key Dialogue Partners, including China, Japan and ROK, as well as relevant stakeholders, particularly private sector in order to seek more assistance and support.
5. To undertake mid-term review with the focus on program activities in the work plan (2019-2021) in order to identify challenges, remaining action lines which have not been addressed, and recommendations; and
6. To conduct ARMAC mid-term review workshop with all key stakeholders.







# Italy to Contribute to ARMAC's Operations



Italy has decided to contribute €100,000 to the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC)'s operation, according to the Press Release by ARMAC on 6 July 2020. The contribution is part of Italy's initiatives aimed at developing a closer relationship with ASEAN and Italy's long-standing engagement in humanitarian mine action. Italy's benevolent gesture will support ARMAC to continue assisting the ASEAN Member States (AMS) to tackle landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) issues in the region.

In accordance with the ASEAN Leaders' recognition of the presence of landmines and ERW as a threat to people's safety and socio-economic development in the region, ARMAC was established to serve as a centre of excellence under the ASEAN Security Cooperation to encourage efforts to address these humanitarian problems for interested AMS.

Since 2018, the Centre has assisted the AMS to collectively tackle the humanitarian aspects of landmines and ERW through an integrated approach of experiences sharing, skills training and other capacity building activities. ARMAC has enhanced cooperation within and between AMS and relevant institutions to enhance awareness programs on the dangers of ERW among affected communities, facilitate appropriate medical and rehabilitation assistance for victims of ERW, upon request from the affected ASEAN Member States, and assist interested ASEAN Member States (AMS) in research and knowledge sharing on the effects of ERW and efforts to address them, including through writing proposals for technical assistance projects and funding, at their specific and individual request.









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