

Cambodia to Host International Diplomatic Meeting on Antipersonnel Mines in 2011

PRESS RELEASE

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Geneva, 2 December 2010 -- Cambodia has been designated to host the 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty in 2011, and His Excellency Prak Sokhonn has been designated President of this prestigious international gathering. The meeting will take place at the Prime Minister's new building in Phnom Penh from 28 November to 3 December 2011. The decision was announced this week in Geneva, Switzerland, at an annual meeting of the 1997 treaty banning antipersonnel landmines.

The 11th Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty will bring together government representatives from most of the 156 countries that have joined the treaty, some states not parties attending as observers, UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society campaigners gathered under the umbrella of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

"We are very proud that Cambodia will host this meeting and that we will work with the partners and friends of the Mine Ban Treaty that we have made since 1997 on our home ground," said Tun Channareth, ICBL ambassador and landmine survivor who received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the ICBL in 1997.

Other campaigners including Steve Goose, chair of the Governance Board of the ICBL, welcomed the words in Prak Sokhonn's opening statement at the Geneva meeting, that "Cambodia, as one of the pioneers of the movement to ban landmines ... will cooperate closely with neighboring countries and others to meet all obligations stipulated in the [Mine Ban Treaty], especially in Article 5."

Article 5 of the treaty requires the clearance of all mined areas in Cambodia within ten years, including those in the contentious border areas. In 2009, Cambodia was granted an additional ten years as it could not meet its initial 2010 treaty-mandated deadline for clearance. It is now required to clear all mined areas on its territory by 2020.

According to the ICBL's Landmine Monitor 2010, Cambodia has at least 44,000 survivors of landmine injuries and many more families and communities living in mine-affected communities.

"Next year's Phnom Penh meeting can be an occasion for mine-affected communities to celebrate progress made on the landmine issue worldwide, for survivors to recognize their abilities and for civil society to push for a Cambodia and world where mines can no longer traumatize people and impede freedom of movement," said Denise Coghlan of the Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions.

The recently released annual report Landmine Monitor 2010 provides an update on progress made towards a mine-free world:

- Myanmar is the only government confirmed to have made new use of antipersonnel mines in 2009 and 2010.
- Only 3 countries--India, Myanmar and Pakistan--were confirmed to be actively producing mines in 2009.
- 198 km² of mined areas was cleared in 2009, the most ever for a single year.

The Tenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, held this week in Geneva, is reviewing progress and challenges in implementing the treaty, and is seeking new ways to enhance cooperation and assistance in world mine action, emphasizing partnerships and national ownership.

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Background

Cambodia is affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) left by 30 years of conflict that ended in the 1990s. The precise extent of contamination is not known. Cambodia's mine clearance deadline extension request submitted in 2009 estimated the total area containing antipersonnel mines and still requiring clearance at 648.8km².

Adopted in 1997, the Mine Ban Treaty entered into force on 1 March 1999. The treaty comprehensively bans all antipersonnel mines, requires destruction of stockpiled mines within four years, requires destruction of mines already in the ground within 10 years, and urges extensive programs to assist the victims of landmines.

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines is a global network in over 90 countries, working for a world free of antipersonnel landmines. In 1997, the ICBL received the Nobel Peace Prize together with its founding coordinator Jody Williams for its efforts to bring about the Mine Ban Treaty.

Additional information is available in [Landmine Monitor 2010](#).