



*Building an environment for a better life and a sustainable future*

**JAIF New Project will start.**

**Signing Ceremony for Attapue Project**

### Signing Ceremony Between JMAS and UXO Laos

on the UXO Clearance Project in Attapue Province assisted by Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)



Mr. Tomoyasu Tagawa, JMAS Representative (Left);

Mr. Bounpone Sayasenh, National Director of UXO Lao (Right).

Dated: February 10, 2010

At the Japan-ASEAN Summit held in December 2005, the Japanese government pledged to contribute 7.5 billion yen (approximately 70 million US dollars), and the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) was established on March 27, 2006.

The aim of the fund is to help establish the ASEAN community by 2015 among ASEAN countries and adjust the economic differences between the countries, and furthermore, to promote the cooperation between Japan and ASEAN. The fund would assist the projects that Japan and ASEAN deem appropriate.

The UXO Lao has implemented UXO clearance activities in nine provinces since 1996 and disposed approximately 900,000 UXOs. The UXO Lao-Attapue, in the southern Lao province of Attapue, was hit by Typhoon Kessana in October 2009, and the office building and equipment were damaged tremendously.

The Japanese government, ASEAN and Japan Mine Action Service, a Japan-based non-profit organization, concluded an agreement to make a donation in the amount of US\$ 725,000 for the UXO clearance activities in Attapue.

On February 10 Wednesday, 2010, Mr. Tomoyasu TAGAWA, Representative of JMAS-Laos, and Mr. Bounpone Sayasenh, Director of UXO Lao, concluded the Service Agreement on UXO clearance project, which includes administrative, as well as technical and other assistances.

Attapue Province, where this project will be implemented, was struck by a large number of bombs during the Indochina War, which lasted for 15 years from the 1960s until the 1970s. The impact of the war is still deeply affecting the lives of the people in the area to this day. In addition, the UXO Lao-Attapue activities have suffered greatly from the devastations caused by typhoon Kessana from last year. Restoring the activities of the UXO Lao-Attapue is significant and urgent, as it expands the land that can be used safely, which would facilitate the agricultural and other socio-economic developments of the area. And it would reduce the number of UXO victims.

(Reference)

JMAS has been implementing a UXO clearance project in Xieng Khung Province in northern Laos since February 2006, with the grant from the Japanese NGO Partnership.

**Donor, President of Nippon Foundation,**

**visits Xiengkhouang Project**

~The Light of Hope~



Takeju Ogata  
President

The Nippon  
Foundation

While he's listening the achievement and work plan of UXO clearance activity

The aroma of straw and earth of the newly reaped rice fields was somehow familiar; the scenery was reminiscent of the idyllic farming villages that were once found throughout Japan.

That was my first impression of the Namtong Village, located twenty minutes' drive from Phonsavanah in Xiengkhouang Province, when I visited the area on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Yet, before I had even a moment to enjoy the nostalgia, a harsh reality descended on the scene, leaving me speechless. In a little field dotted with the stumps of the previous rice harvest lay fifteen or so piles of pink sandbags, placed there in preparation for the disposal of "Bomby" cluster bombs.

The field was still being used to grow rice, and had been tilled to a depth of fifteen to twenty centimeters by ploughs yoked to oxen and water buffalo; for the people of this area, unexploded ordnance is a part of daily life. The bombs lie here in part because the United States, following the bombing of Vietnam, used Laos as a dumping ground for vast quantities of unused ordnance. War, whether just or not, imposes untold hardship on subsequent generations.

In the piercing sunlight that accompanies the start of the dry season, the female corps of UXO Lao cautiously poked around in the earth with the weighted probes used for preliminary bomb disposal. The women work under the strict but warm and protective gaze of seasoned veterans from the Japanese self-defense force. However, in Xiengkhouang Province alone, it is estimated that it will take two to three hundred years to completely dispose of all of the bombs.

The sight of the women at work, with little concern for the many hours required or the possible outcomes, is one which will remain with me for many years. To me, these women are living proof that crimes perpetrated by humans, no matter how heinous, can with time be resolved by humans.

Resting in the shade of a tree, UXO Lao's female corps chatted merrily with the veterans from the self-defense force, their faces expressing little concern. Though they downplayed their work as "old men's international aid," these Japanese veterans put their lives on the line for this demanding job. It makes me proud to be Japanese. And I hold the brave women of the corps as well in the very highest esteem, as they walk their endless path.



UXO Lao staffs demonstrate the UXO clearance by using the detectors

*Please let us have your comments. Contact details above*