

**Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity and Prosperity**

Prime Minister's Office

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**RESOLUTIONS
of the Lao PDR Government
on National Strategic Plan for the UXO Programme
in the Lao People's Democratic Republic
2003 – 2013
“The Safe Path Forward”**

PART I. INTRODUCTION

1. Fifteen years of war from the early 1960s to the mid 1970s left the economy of Lao PDR in shambles after the country was sprayed with some 2 million tonnes of unexploded ordnance (UXO), of which 10 to 30% are estimated to have failed to detonate on impact. In response to the resulting humanitarian crisis, the Lao National UXO Programme (UXO Lao) was established in 1996, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.
2. Seven years and some 3,500 hectares of land cleared later, the Government recognises the need to develop a longer-term view of the UXO problem, and to establish the proper linkages between unexploded ordnance and national development objectives.
3. In regards to the Ottawa Convention, the Government of Lao PDR will carefully monitor its implementation.
4. Consequently, at the end of 2002, the Chairman of UXO Lao's National Steering Committee initiated a strategic planning process, involving consultations with a cross-section of representatives from concerned ministries, within UXO Lao itself, with UN and other multi-lateral agencies, with donors, and with implementing partners. The result of this process is the present Plan, **considered and approved in the Government Meeting held on 29-31 July 2003**, and which shall serve as the guide for all UXO/mine action activities in Lao PDR for the period 2003-2013.

PART II. AIM & SCOPE

5. This Strategic Plan outlines the approach of the Government of Lao PDR to address the UXO/mine problem in the period extending from its approval through to the end of year 2013. Except where otherwise stated, this Plan covers more specifically UXO Lao operations in the following 9 provinces :

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Savannakhet | 4. Khammouane | 7. Houaphan |
| 2. Xieng Khouang | 5. Sekong | 8. Attapeu |
| 3. Saravane | 6. Champassak | 9. Luang Prabang |

6. In line with priorities established in the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NPEP), the pursued end-state of this Plan is for “*people from the most highly impacted communities to live free from the impacts of landmines and UXO*”. Those impacts will be reduced by a combination of clearance operations, of Mine/UXO Risk Education activities, of assistance to survivors of mine/UXO accidents and their dependents, and of the marking off of lower-priority areas for later clearance.

7. Without prejudice to ensuring the greatest impact of the UXO programme as a whole, the prioritisation of tasks will, amongst other factors, take into consideration the needs of communities living in the 46 districts identified as national priority development areas in the NPEP.

PART III. OBJECTIVES

8. More specifically,
- a. In terms of community awareness, UXO/Mine Risk Education (MRE) teams will visit and deliver MRE training to all impacted communities in Lao PDR (as identified in the 1997 National Impact Survey), and UXO/mine accidents will be reduced to a national accident rate not exceeding 100 persons/year;
 - b. In terms of survey and clearance, all agricultural areas considered to be “high priority” will be cleared, as well as a sizeable portion of other areas identified as “medium priority” – for a total of no less than 18,000 hectares (180 km²) of land cleared by UXO Lao alone;
 - c. In terms of victim assistance, a national database on Mine/UXO accidents (covering all 18 provinces) will be developed and updated regularly, to feed into the prioritisation of clearance and MRE tasks. The specific needs of survivors of UXO/mine accidents, in terms of both physical rehabilitation and socio-economic integration, will be factored in all national/local public health initiatives;

PART IV. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

9. The Government of Lao PDR proposes to re-structure the UXO/Mine Action sector, as follows (see Organisational Chart 1 attached) :

- (a) A National Regulatory Authority (NRA) will be established and will report directly to the Office of the Prime Minister. The NRA will be composed of representatives of all line ministries concerned with or affected by UXO/landmines, by the CPC, as well as of observers from the donor community. It will be responsible for :
 - The periodic review and implementation of this Strategic Plan,
 - The definition and provision of policy direction,
 - The accreditation, licensing, and oversight of all UXO/Mine Action operators (in clearance operations, in Community Awareness, and in Victim Assistance),
 - The management of the database and, as such, the prioritisation and related tasking of all UXO/mine action operators,

- The coordination of all UXO/mine action activities throughout the country,
 - The external Quality Assurance of all UXO/Mine Action activities,
 - The conduct of Post Clearance Impact Assessments, etc.;
- (b) All UXO/Mine Action operators will work under the tasking orders and the oversight of the National Regulatory Authority. Each operator will act as a self-standing entity and will be fully accountable to its funder(s) as well as to the National Regulatory Authority. In and through their work, international operators will be expected to support the establishment and development of national UXO/mine action entities, and they will conduct all their operations in accordance with national standards as promulgated by the NRA. Operators will be grouped into sectoral components as below :
- i. UXO/Mine Risk Education operators, national and international as relevant,
 - ii. Clearance operators, whether humanitarian, commercial or military, national and international as relevant. UXO Lao will remain the “preferred national humanitarian UXO/mine clearance operator”, and
 - iii. Victim Assistance operators, national and international, as relevant;

Operators will actively take part in sectoral Technical Working Groups (TWG) responsible for the coordination and planning of activities in each sector. TWG meetings will be convened on a regular basis, and will be chaired by the National Regulatory Authority.

- (c) Multilateral agencies (UN, EU, International Financial Institutions, and others) will be invited to support any aspect of this Plan, and may be called upon to collaborate with the Government in the established decision-making bodies;
- (d) Donors will be invited to actively take part in the design and execution of the programme, and will also be called upon to take part in the Steering Committee of UXO Lao and in the work of the National Regulatory Authority.

10. The UNDP Trust Fund established in 1996 will be maintained and will be the preferred vehicle to support all aspects of UXO/Mine Action in Lao PDR. Its resources may be used to support the implementation of all aspects of this Plan. A revised Trust Fund Agreement will be entered into between UNDP and the Government in order to reflect this change. The Trust Fund will continue to be managed by UNDP and executed by the Government of Lao PDR under the national execution (NEX) modality, according to internationally-accepted financial standards, as will all activities funded through the Trust Fund.

PART V. PRIORITIES

11. The 1997 Impact Survey recorded a total of 2,861 villages (i.e. 25% of all villages in Lao PDR) reporting UXO contamination either within the residential perimeter of the village, or in immediate outlying areas - 2,636 of those villages are in the 9 provinces where UXO Lao currently operates. The Survey does not however provide an estimated size of contaminated areas, neither in individual villages nor in aggregate terms. A reasonably accurate estimate of total suspected contaminated areas will be determined as a matter of priority, through stepped-up Technical Surveys.

12. Furthermore, there is a need to further define and prioritise contaminated areas. Technical Surveys will therefore also focus on categorising land use in three broad categories, each composed of a number of sub categories, as listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 : UXO/Mine Clearance Priorities

PRIORITIES	TYPES OF TASKS
Priority I (High)	1. Agricultural tasks 2. Roving tasks 3. Public service utilities (medical/public health, water points, etc.) 4. Educational facilities
Priority II (Medium)	1. Grazing land and forested areas 2. Communal facilities (religious/cultural sites, markets, recreational areas, etc.) 3. Government facilities and offices
Priority III (Low)	1. Public infrastructure work 2. Communal “profit-making” areas 3. Tourism sites 4. Commercial/private business sites

13. For the purpose of this Plan, humanitarian UXO/mine clearance operations will focus *strictly* on Priorities I and II, with a marked preference for Priority I tasks. By the end of year 2013, all Priority I tasks shall have been dealt with (i.e. either cleared or marked).

14. Few, if any, of Priority III tasks will be addressed in the context of this Plan by operators funded through humanitarian assistance programmes. These will be dealt primarily by commercial operators.

PART VI. Planning Assumptions

15. This Plan adheres to the recommendations of the Impact Survey (1997) as well as to the objectives of the NPEP.

16. There currently exists only limited comprehensive and up-to-date “hard data” on all aspects the UXO issue, e.g. on the number of victims nationwide, on trials of new methodologies and technologies in Lao PDR, or on the impacts of more streamlined planning processes. This Plan will therefore be reviewed on an annual basis as new information is collected and as new developments happen.

17. This Plan is based on the continued deployment by UXO Lao of 24 area clearance teams in the nine provinces outlined under para. 5 above. The workforce of UXO Lao will remain in the range of approx. 1100 personnel, of which over 1000 will be based in the Provinces, involved directly in the conduct of and support to clearance operations.

18. It is assumed that the UXO/mine clearance sector will be composed of the full range of autonomous UXO/mine clearance operators, including UXO Lao, the military (which has been involved in a number of commercial-type contracts), local as well as international operators, both humanitarian and commercial. The proposed clearance objective of this Plan, approx. 180 km², is based solely on UXO Lao output; clearance output by other operators will be in excess of the objectives of this Plan.

19. The projected increase in the yearly output of UXO Lao from 850 hectares (2002) to a peak of 2000 hectares in year 2008 will be accounted for by, amongst others, the following :

- a. Improvements in prioritisation and tasking of clearance assets

- b. The strengthening of the organisation's internal management processes (e.g. budgeting, procurement, logistics, etc.) through the introduction of Quality Management practices (2003);
 - c. The streamlining of practices in procurement, in equipment maintenance and in general support functions, in order to ensure optimal use of all assets;
 - d. The widespread introduction of new clearance methodologies and procedures (e.g. Villager Assisted Clearance) in order to maximise the use of technically-trained personnel;
 - e. The on-going training/capacity building of the organisation's personnel through the continued deployment of both short- and long-term international advisors; etc.
20. More streamlined planning and tasking of UXO/mine action assets during the rainy season will be done, which may involve, amongst others, the following :
- (a) As an integral part of the provincial planning process, "dry area tasks" will be earmarked for operations during the monsoon season;
 - (b) A portion of Area Clearance resources will be re-directed towards Roving Tasks; and
 - (c) Increased Technical Survey capacity will be constituted from Area Clearance resources otherwise under-utilised;
21. Equipment replacement costs are factored in the estimated costs outlined under Section IX below.
22. Productivity of UXO Lao deminers will reach a peak of 235 square meters per day per deminer in year 2005 - from a current national average of 133 sqm/day/deminer.
23. The UXO Programme will gradually introduce new clearance methodologies and technologies (e.g. Villager Assisted Clearance (VAC), Explosive Detection Dogs, bio-sensor technology, etc.). The increase in yearly output by of UXO Lao accounts *only* for improvements brought about by the introduction of new work methodologies, not of new technology. This may be properly accounted for in future reviews of the Plan.
24. All operators in the sector will work autonomously from one another, and will report directly to the National Regulatory Authority.
25. UXO Lao will continue to operate under the umbrella of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.
26. By the end of year 2003, all Mine/UXO Risk Education will be conducted under the umbrella of the Ministry of Information and Culture. MRE activities will continue to be funded through the Trust Fund.
27. The Ministry of Health has expressed an interest in establishing a National Victim Assistance programme. UNDP will support such an initiative, as may other bilateral and multilateral agencies. The Trust Fund will also support activities in this sector.
28. The mandate of UXO Lao will be modified to reflect its new responsibilities as strictly a UXO/mine clearance operator. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, in consultation with donors, will determine the best modality for the oversight of UXO Lao's operations.
29. The Training Centre currently operated by UXO Lao will be maintained, and will serve as the national training facility for all UXO programme-related needs. UXO Lao will thus train

deminers and support staff of all independent operators on a cost-recovery basis.

30. In the course of year 2003, UXO Lao will complete a comprehensive internal Management Review, in order to rationalise its structure and management practices. This Review will include recommendations on the nature and expected duration of technical support required.

31. For planning purposes, UXO Lao's clearance capacity will remain at the levels of June 2002, i.e. :

<u>Province</u>		<u>Province</u>	
Savannakhet :	4 teams	Champassak :	2 teams
Xieng Khouang :	4 teams	Houaphan :	3 teams
Saravane :	3 teams	Attapeu :	2 teams
Khammouane :	2 teams	Luang Prabang :	2 teams
Sekong :	2 teams		

The above allocation of UXO Lao resources per province may later be amended in accordance with the findings of Technical Surveys, in order to ensure the optimal allocation of clearance resources.

32. The National Regulatory Authority will bear ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this Plan, for the prioritisation of UXO/mine action tasks, and for the related tasking of all operators.

33. Operators will eventually deploy their own UXO/mine action capacity, over and above those currently deployed by UXO Lao. In terms of clearance statistics, the output of operators will add to the stated objectives of this Plan.

PART VII. Projected Achievements

34. A total of 2,636 UXO contaminated villages were identified in the Impact Survey (1997) in the above 9 provinces. By first focusing on the conduct of Technical Surveys in those villages, a clearer picture of the total areas to be dealt with, of the most pressing needs in each community/district/province, and ultimately of the total resources required to address the problem will emerge.

35. Technical Survey procedures will be modified in order to classify all clearance tasks according to the Priority Chart under Table 1 above. All technical survey data will be entered into the national database, on the IMSMA platform (Information Management System for Mine Action - yet to be installed), which will become the primary tool for prioritisation of tasks and for the recording of progress against the present Plan.

36. In order to complete the technical surveys by the end of June 2005, the following survey capacity in each Province will be established, drawing from existing clearance capacity where required :

<u>Province</u>		<u>Province</u>	
Savannakhet :	8 teams	Champassak :	4 teams
Xieng Khouang :	8 teams	Houaphan :	6 teams
Saravane :	6 teams	Attapeu :	4 teams
Khammouane :	4 teams	Luang Prabang :	4 teams
Sekong :	4 teams		

Drawing from their respective clearance assets, provinces will increase their Technical Survey capacity during the monsoon months, until completion of the Surveys.

37. Taking into account the above assumptions, yet excluding any extra capacity that will be set up and deployed under the control of other operators, the UXO Programme will achieve the outputs outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2 : Yearly Outputs of the UXO Programme

Year	Activity	Completion Date	Remarks
2003	1. Feasibility of national Victim Database	30 Sept. 2003	HI, involving Min. Health By UNDP, to be taken over by National Regulatory Authority Min. Info & Culture, Min. Education, LWU, LYU, etc. Per approved UXO Lao Work Plan CA teams of UXO Lao Min. Health, Operators
	2. Review of UXO Lao Management	30 Sept. 2003	
	3. Initiation of Post-Clearance Impact Assessments (PCIA)	01 Oct. 2003	
	4. Establishment of increased Tech Survey capacity	31 Dec. 2003	
	5. Establishment of Regulatory Authority	31 Dec. 2003	
	6. IMSMA installed and running	31 Dec. 2003	
	7. Transfer of CA capacity to other IPs	31 Dec. 2003	
	8. Tech. Survey of 500 villages	31 Dec. 2003	
	9. 942 ha of land cleared by UXO LAO	31 Dec. 2003	
	10. 60 “new” villages visited by CA	31 Dec. 2003	
	11. Victim Assistance Plan of Action	31 Dec. 2003	
2004	1. New CA curriculum developed	30 June 2004	Min. Info & Culture, Min. Education Increased output due to introduction of QM and new methodology
	2. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2004	
	3. CA outreach to 300 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2004	
	4. Tech. Survey of 1300 villages	31 Dec. 2004	
	5. 1300 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2004	
2005	1. Tech. Survey of 840 villages	30 June 2005	All Tech Surveys completed
	2. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2005	
	3. CA outreach to 450 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2005	
	4. 1500 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2005	
2006	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2006	
	2. CA outreach to 450 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2006	
	3. 1800 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2006	
2007	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2007	
	2. CA outreach to 450 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2007	
	3. 1800 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2007	
2008	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2008	
	2. CA outreach to 450 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2008	
	3. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2008	
2009	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2009	All UXO-affected villages visited at least once by CA
	2. CA outreach to 450 “new” villages	31 Dec. 2009	
	3. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2009	
2010	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2010	
	2. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2010	
2011	1. Review of Strategic Plan	31 Aug. 2011	
	2. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2011	
2012	1. Development of new Strategic Plan	31 June 2012	As required
	2. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2012	
2013	1. 2000 ha of land cleared by UXO Lao	31 Dec. 2013	

PART VIII. PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

38. In year 2003, the budget of the UXO Programme, as approved by the National Steering Committee in February 2003, stands at a total of US\$ 4,2 million. It is expected that, for future years, and with the establishment of the NRA and the establishment of new programming in Victim Assistance, UXO Programme needs as implemented by the Government of Lao PDR will remain relatively constant.

39. Planning assumptions for programme requirements are as follows :

- (a) An equipment replacement cost of \$400,000 for replacement of non-serviceable mine detectors and other equipment of UXO Lao is budgeted in each programme year;
- (b) The costs related to the introduction of new technologies is not included in the following projections (for example, the cost of setting up and of operating an Explosive Detection Dog capacity could require as much as an additional US\$ 600,000 per year);
- (c) Training in Technical Survey is estimated at US\$ 20,000 budgeted in years 2003/2004;
- (d) For the foreseeable future, the Government of Lao PDR will maintain its annual contribution in cash to the overall UXO Programme at US\$ 50,000.

40. The start-up cost (equipment, establishment of offices, etc.) of the National Regulatory Authority is expected to be in the range of approx. US\$ 215,000. The yearly operating costs of the NRA, with a maximum staff of 25, is expected to be in the range of US\$ 175,000, excluding the costs related to the deployment of Technical Advisors to support the development of the organisation (estimated at 3,5 full-time equivalent for no less than the first three years).

41. The yearly cost of UXO Lao operations is estimated to be in the range of US\$ 3,5 million.

42. The yearly cost of the nationally-executed activities in Mine/UXO Risk Education is expected to be in the range of US\$ 750,000.

43. The yearly cost of the nationally-executed activities in Mine/UXO Victim Assistance is expected to be in the range of US\$ 700,000.

44. In summary, the yearly cost of the nationally-executed UXO Programme is expected to be as follows :

	ACTIVITIES	Annual Cost
01.	National Regulatory Authority (<i>Plus</i> one-time start-up cost of approx. US\$ 215,000)	US\$ 175,000
02.	UXO Lao Clearance Operations	US\$ 3,500,000
03.	Mine/UXO Risk Education	US\$ 750,000
04.	Mine/UXO Victim Assistance	US\$ 700,000
	TOTAL	US\$ 5,125,000

45. In addition to its own contribution to the Programme, which may be increased as and when state revenues increase, the Government of Lao PDR will seek the continued support of the international community in the execution and the funding of this Strategic Plan.

PART IX. IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

46. The National Steering Committee introduces the National Strategic Plan for UXO Programme in the Lao PDR uniformly and coordinates with various agencies in the formulation of plans, programmes, projects and activities related to UXO problem in the Lao PDR.

47. Ministries, ministerial level organisations, provinces, municipalities and special zones are the key organisations to successfully implement the National Strategic Plan for UXO Programme in the Lao PDR.

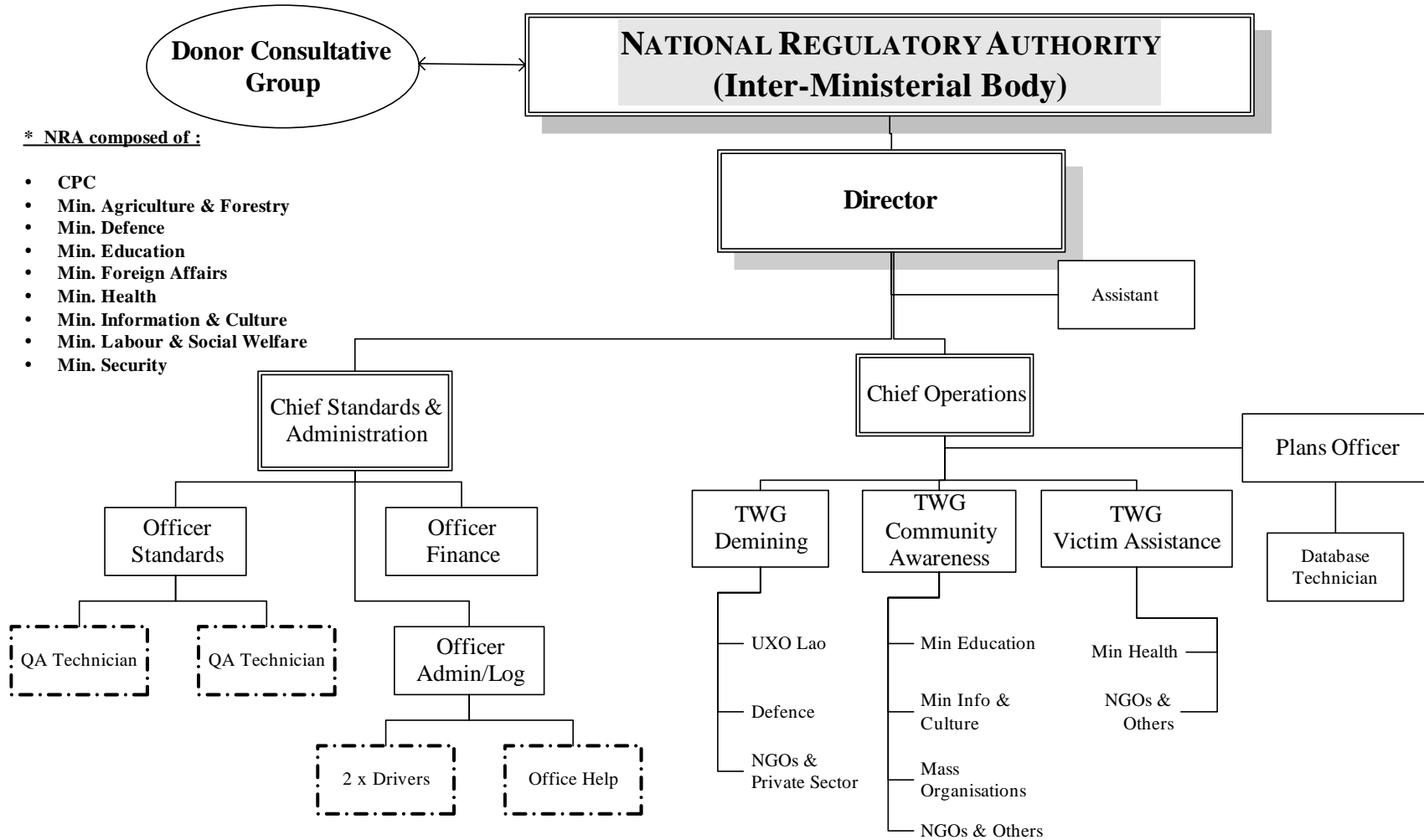
(This strategic plan has been considered and approved in the government meeting held on 29-31 July 2003 according to the document proposed by the Minister of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Chairman of the National Steering Committee of UXO Lao Programme, No. 2480/LSW, dated 25 August 2003)

The Prime Minister

Signed

Bounyung Vorachit

Organisational Chart of the National Regulatory Authority



* NRA composed of :

- CPC
- Min. Agriculture & Forestry
- Min. Defence
- Min. Education
- Min. Foreign Affairs
- Min. Health
- Min. Information & Culture
- Min. Labour & Social Welfare
- Min. Security

* TWG = Chair of Sectoral Technical Working Group