

**MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES
GENEVA 20-25 jun 2011**

**Assisting Mine Victim Survivors
Republic of Serbia**

Still the exact number of anti-personnel mine victim survivors in Republic of Serbia hasn't been determined.

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible and decision making authority for providing financial support and protection to citizens of Republic of Serbia who suffered the damage caused by armed conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, as well as from residual war material on the territory of Republic of Serbia. Target groups of citizens are:

- Direct participants in armed conflicts - the military personnel;
- Family members of deployed military persons killed in armed conflicts;
- Civilians who suffered the damage caused by war, by residual war material or terroristic actions;
- Family members of civilians killed under described circumstances.

All listed individuals are recognized and categorized as: disabled veterans; users of invalidity benefit; civilians disabled in war; or family member of civilian war victims.

Ministry for Labour and Social Policy is keeping records of beneficiaries which is relevant for exercising their rights in the field of disabled veterans support and support to civilians, war invalids. Records are kept in the form of informative data base called Integrated Data Evidence of Beneficiaries in the field of Disabled Veteran's Support This data base contains:

- Personal data;
- Data on recognized status and rights;
- Circumstances of wounding or death;
- Type and level of physical impairment;
- Socio-economic status of beneficiary.

Data base was established in 2009.

Data in the evidence are updated three times per month

Existing records do not contain data on the type of war or other means which have caused physical impairment or death. However, by individual inspection of the evidence provided on the circumstances and manner of inflicting bodily damage.

The abovementioned data base could be a starting point for the project coordinated by victim assistance expert, that could lead to final and detailed data base of all mine victims. For realisation of this project additional funds specially intended for this purpose are needed.

All anti-personnel mine victim survivors in Republic of Serbia are enclosed with in the system of health care on all levels:

- Emergency medical care
- Treatment
- Physical therapy and rehabilitation
- Supplying with P&O aids

The Law on professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disability was adopted in our country and it entered into force on May 23, 2009. (Provisions of law relating to the duties of the employer who employs fifty (50) employees to engage one person with disability entered into force on May 24, 2010.)

This law is based on the principles:

- 1) respect for human rights and dignity of persons with disabilities;
- 2) inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of social life on an equal basis - in accordance with professional skills;
- 3) encourage employment of persons with disabilities in appropriate jobs and appropriate working conditions;
- 4) prohibiting discrimination against persons with disabilities, in accordance with the law;
- 5) equal rights and obligations;
- 6) gender equality of persons with disabilities.

The Book of regulations on orthopedic devices for the disabled veterans which came into force in June 2009, prescribes medical indications under which veterans are prescribed orthopedic and other devices, their types and expiry dates, as well as ways of realization of their rights.

An integral part of this Book of regulations is the List of devices which a disabled

veteran can receive on the basis of his medical indications, including prostheses, orthoses, wheelchairs and replaceable components which are necessary for the use of these devices.

A disabled veteran can be prescribed an electro motor wheelchair or a high-tech sophisticated prosthesis on his request if a medical commission can prescribe it on the basis of his medical indication.

We will continue intensive process of improving accessibility and availability of all services through eliminating physical, social, cultural, economic, political and other barriers. We need to raise the level of information system for landmine survivors. For this purpose we need support and cooperation with GOs and NGOs.

The cooperation the NGO sector and representatives of victims' organizations has improved significantly from 10-MSP.

The Ministry of labour and social affair of Republic of Serbia together with the Special hospital for rehabilitation and orthopedic prosthetics, Belgrade concluded an Agreement on production, maintaining and delivery of orthopedic devices, which regulates mutual relationships of the agreed sides in providing orthopedic devices for disabled veterans.

The expert team of the Special hospital is competent for evaluating psychophysical competence of all for using a device with the high-quality components, reeducation in using these devices and their control.

It is necessary to provide additional fundings for raising the professional level of all team members, which can be done through continuing education in country and abroad.

Raising awareness on the rights and available services of the mine victims is a dynamic and permanently ongoing process that is constantly being improved. (Ministry of labour and social affairs, Ministry of health, Ministry of defense...).

Long term regional cooperation that began a long time ago is still active through the exchange and use of national experience (through education and fabrication of prostheses and orthoses). Special Hospital for rehabilitation, as an educational basis of the Medical faculty of the Belgrade University, School of applied medical studies, as well as Human Study e. V. in cooperation with Don Bosco University, ISPO and Handicap International are approaching the end of their studies in prosthetics and orthotics for the first generation of students in Southeastern Europe.

Serbia has suffered from the economic transition period so we urgently need to raise

funds and to contribute financially to all projects that deal with the improvement of the quality of life of landmine survivors.

Strategic aim of all these activities is to improvement of status of persons with disabilities and landmine survivors in Serbia,

Igor Simanic MD