

**Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio- Economic  
Reintegration, 23 May 2012**

*Distinguished Co-Chairs,*

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, let me express our appreciation to the President of the 11 MSP, H.E Prak Sokhonn, as well as to the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees, the ISU and the GICHD for organizing this Intersessional Meeting.

Based on the Cartagena and Vientiane Action Plans, Albania aligned and harmonized its victim assistance capacities and programs with the other relevant National Strategies and policies concerning the people with disabilities.

In this context Albania has widely involved all victim assistance stakeholders such as; line government ministries, health and other local authorities, national and international organizations engaged in victim assistance and disability sector, including survivors and other people with disabilities or their representative organizations.

As **regarding the main challenges** in applying the victim assistance aspects of the *Cartagena Action Plan*, shortly, I would like to outline the following;

- Rehabilitation is not having the needed attention and priority within the health sector and compare to other disciplines in medicine, therefore this has created delays in developing the capacities and facilities needed.
- Albania is facing difficulties in securing much needed imported materials and components for the new fitments and repairs of prostheses. Although, Ministry of Health is covering all the running costs and also has provided limited financial resources on yearly bases to purchase the local materials, this amount cannot cover all needs of the amputees. Therefore, any donation or financial assistance for these materials and components would be welcomed.
- An important objective in our program as outlined in the national plan for victim assistance is “Addressing the medical and socio-economic needs of persons injured by Abandoned Unexploded Ordnance”, but we are facing some difficulties to fulfill this objective.

Regarding the **objectives Albania achieved or will do so** now and by the Third Review Conference, here it is the summarizing;

- There is more awareness and advocacy in regarding the rights and needs of Persons with Disabilities, including the survivors.
- Data and detailed statistics on the casualties from mines/cluster munitions and hotspots are available and disaggregated by age and gender.
- Monitoring tools and capacities to monitor the results and measure the progress in the implementation of the strategy for the people with disabilities are in place. The report is made available on yearly bases by the secretariat of the National Council for People with Disabilities.
- Emergency and health care capacities are continuously being improved. These services are available also in rural areas and equally to everyone. The guidelines issued from Health Insurance Institute for medical staff at Primary Health Care, provides the obligations for medical visits at home and all other relevant assistance for people with disabilities including survivors. The list of medicines which treat the severe illnesses is expanding.
- The physical rehabilitation capacities expanded geographically in Albania and technical expertise available improved.
- The Inter - ministerial Working Group has finalized its work in reviewing of the disability-related legal and policy frameworks with the aim to assess their compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Despite the progress done, Albania faces challenges in addressing the needs of the survivors and other persons with disabilities. I would like to appeal on our development partners to continue their support to our efforts so we can further improve the lives of the people who are still suffering the consequences of landmines.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me at the end of my statement, to have the opportunity of expressing once again our gratitude to our partners, such as: UNDP, ITF Enhancing Human Security, ICRC, ISU and GICHD, and Handicap International which have proved to be such an essential part of our program.

And, I would like to thank our loyal donors in victim assistance; the US State Department, European Commission, DfiD, the Government of France, Turkey and the Albania private sector, for their generous support which contributes to make a difference in people's lives.

Thank you for your attention.