

MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES 21-25 MAY

Assisting Mine Victim Survivors Republic of Serbia

Mister President, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to update the progress in the field of victim assistance in the Republic of Serbia according to the recommendation of the Cartagena action plan.

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

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible and decision making authority for providing financial support and protection to citizens of the 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 the 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 disabled 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 Affairs keeps 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 which 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 are updated three times per month.

Existing records do not contain data on the way nor other means which have caused physical impairment or death.

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

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

Landmine victims are treated in specialized institutions for prosthetic and orthotic rehabilitation – The Specialized hospital for rehabilitation and orthopedic prosthetics Belgrade, Rehabilitation clinic, Health centers, Departments for physical therapy and rehabilitation within general hospitals, workshops for production of prosthetic 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 Serbian Government ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

Also adopted are:

- the strategy for the improvement of status of persons with disabilities 2007-2015;
- the strategy for fighting poverty,
- the strategy for the development of social care system,
- the law on prevention of discrimination of persons with disabilities,
- the law on privileges for persons with disabilities in the public transportation system;
- the regulation, that provides the liberation of the paying the participation for medical treatment and orthopaedic aids for the great number of the insured and their families who' s incomes are lower than the agreed minimal earnings, including the military war-invalids, civil war-invalids and others;
- the drafts laws and regulations related to support for persons with disability,

monitors compliance with international conventions and tracks comparative legislation in the field of support to the disabled, through the Department for The Persons with Disability Support; the Department is focused to monitoring exercise related to implementation of the strategic goals and objectives defined in the Disability Strategy, promotion and advancement of PWD rights, development and support to alternative forms of support for persons with disability towards effective inclusion in social and economic life of Serbia

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, support and cooperation with GOs and NGOs would have great importance for us.

According to recommendations of the Cartagena Action plan, we have made endeavours and began work on plan for providing help to mine victims that will include representatives of government sector (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), non-government organisations and representatives of mine victims associations.

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

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 of the rights and available services to the mine victims is a dynamic and permanently ongoing process that is constantly being improved.

Long term regional cooperation that has begun long time ago. Exchange in use of national experiences among Special Hospital for rehabilitation 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 and ISPO is still active.

Republic of Serbia has suffered from the economic transition period so we need funds in order to realize projects that would improve the quality of life of landmine survivors.

Strategic aim of all these activities is improvement of status of persons with disabilities and landmine survivors in the Republic of Serbia.

Igor Simanic MD