

**REMARKS OF THE AMBASSADOR OF ITALY  
H.E. MARIO E. MAIOLINI  
DURING THE MORNING SESSION OF  
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE  
GENEVA, JANUARY 29, 2002**

Thank You, Madam Co-Chair,

The distinguished delegates might have seen, distributed outside this room, a fact-sheet on the financial commitments undertaken by the Italian government on 2001 budget for programmes on mine clearance, rehabilitation and victims assistance. (*see below*)

These commitments sum-up to a total of more than 5.6 millions of Euro (4.840.000 US \$) mainly for victims assistance. It is the biggest ever from Italy and is a considerable effort – we think – by any standard.

It means we want to count more in an important sector of humanitarian assistance against violence and in order to demonstrate indiscriminate compassion for the suffering of human beings.

Those financial commitments give highest priorities to Afghanistan, Libya, Kosovo, Yemen, Bosnia. They are basically channeled through international organisations/agencies/bodies: mainly UNMAS, UNDP, UNICEF, GICHD.

By increasing our efforts, we wanted to counter a trend, which we fear i.e. the decreasing attention of public opinion on the priority of mine action and the consequent risk of less financial funding by various governments. While the problems posed by the landmines are still largely in front of us, Italy would not like to see the Ottawa Process to slow down its momentum, for lack of political will or for diminished public awareness.

Events in Afghanistan will require international financial commitments from the international community (as it has been the case of Italy), even if public awareness could be short-lived.

This is why Italy plans to keep, and intends to increase, its support to mine action also for the current year 2002, so there is no doubt over our undiminished and growing stake in the Ottawa Convention. It is a political decision.

Madam Co-chair, in order to sustain world wide the political will in favour of mine action we must show results.

We have listened with attention, these days, speakers stressing the difficulty to measure progress on victims assistance. However we need a growing allocation of resources exactly in order to sustain our endeavours. Moreover we need long-term commitments from donor countries because – as it was as well stressed during this Standing Committee proceedings – disabled people are disabled for life. In order to attain all these targets we still need practical information on real progress of what we have been doing so far. We need to quantify the past work, we need to show productivity, efficiency in the use of our scarce resources...our resources will always be scarce: so we should avoid a prevalence of bureaucratic structure over concrete action. As a matter of fact, concrete action is what we need to promote the universalization of the Ottawa Convention, which remains also for Italy one of the main priorities.

Thank You, Madam Co-chair.

## ITALY - 2001

### MINE CLEARANCE, REHABILITATION AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

**Remark:**

*The list includes all the financial commitments undertaken by the Italian Government on the available funds in the 2001 budget. Disbursements will be completed in 2002.*

| <u>COUNTRY</u> | <u>PROJECTS</u>  | <u>Euro</u> |
|----------------|--|-------------|
| AFGHANISTAN    | Support to emergency demining programmes (UNMAS) - 2001  | 1.570.030   |
| AFGHANISTAN    | Assistance and rehabilitation to victims of war and landmines (UNDP/NGO <i>Emergency</i> ) - 2001                | 1.032.920   |
| KOSOVO         | Support to mine clearance (2001))  | 258.000     |
| LEBANON        | Bilateral assistance: supply of equipment for humanitarian demining (2001)                                       | 25.822      |
| OAS            | Support to humanitarian demining programmes ( <i>Nicaragua-Honduras</i> ) - 2001                                 | 114.000     |
| BOSNIA         | Mine risk education (UNICEF) - 2001  | 224.142     |
| BOSNIA         | Assistance and rehabilitation to victims of war and landmines (NGO <i>Intersos</i> ) - 2001                      | 242.734,7   |
| ETHIOPIA       | Mine risk education (UNICEF) - 2001  | 224.142     |
| LYBIA          | Support to humanitarian demining programmes  | 1.265.320   |
| YEMEN          | Support to humanitarian demining programmes (UNMAS) - 2001   | 280.436     |
| ICBL           | Support to the activities of the International Campaign for Banning Landmines in Italy (UNMAS) - 2001            | 100.709     |
| GICHD          | Sponsorship Programme (for the participation of delegations from LDC to the activities of the Ottawa Convention) | 67.305      |
| GICHD          | Contribution to the Implementation Support Unit  | 40.000      |
| UNEARMARKED    | Contribution to UNMAS - 2001   | 182.826     |

**TOTAL**

**EURO 5.628.386,7**