

STANDING COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION

Closing remarks by the Co-Chairs (Cambodia and New Zealand)

6 June 2008

All States Parties made a commitment through the *Nairobi Action Plan* to enhance our efforts in regard to the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of landmine survivors in the period 2005 to 2009. To achieve this aim engaging all the relevant ministries and other key actors in the disability sector is essential. This collaboration is essential to not only develop but actually implement a comprehensive plan of action based on specific and measurable objectives. Survivors and other persons with disabilities must be a part of this process.

Through the interventions and discussions this week it is clear that progress is being made but more needs to be done to ensure that what we discuss in Geneva is translated into actions on the ground that will improve the quality of daily life of survivors. We have greater clarity on efforts in the majority of the 25 States Parties that have reported responsibility for significant numbers of mine survivors and we thank all the representatives for their updates.

In the interventions of the States Parties, we heard many examples of progress in achieving the aims of the *Nairobi Action Plan*. We intend to again record this progress in a document to be presented to the 9MSP.

Progress is being made as all relevant States Parties have engaged, to some extent, in the process.

We heard from those in a position to provide assistance and appreciate their efforts in providing greater clarity. The importance of ensuring that victim assistance is on the agenda in bilateral discussions on development with relevant States Parties was highlighted.

It is clear that **ALL** States Parties are in a position to “provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims” be that through the provision of services within the healthcare and social services systems in countries with significant numbers of mine survivors or through the resources provided by the international community.

The situation for every State is different. The *Dead Sea Progress Report* emphasized this point, noting that “progress in victim assistance should be specific, measurable and time-bound, with specific measures logically needing

to be determined by individual States Parties based on their very diverse circumstances.” However, there is one feature that is relevant for all States Parties. Meeting the rights and needs of persons with disabilities requires a holistic approach that can only be achieved through collaboration and coordination between all relevant ministries and actors in the disability sector, including persons with disabilities.

The needs in some States are immense and several challenges remain. States may need to prioritize on what is achievable and what will make the greatest difference. More needs to be done to engage Ministries of Finance to ensure that the costs of services for persons with disabilities are taken into account in budget allocations. And donor States need to support the building of national capacities in the areas that are priorities for the recipient State.

Now, more than ever, the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, that has been the hallmark of this Convention, must be reinvigorated. In the 18 months leading up to the Second Review Conference we encourage States Parties, the donor community, international agencies, and the non governmental sector, to work together to ensure the information on the status of victim assistance in the relevant States Parties is as comprehensive as possible to reflect the reality of the situation on the ground. Only then can this Standing Committee truly record progress in the implementation of the AP Mine Ban Convention, in relation to victim assistance.