

ICBL Intervention – Jesus Martinez, LSN-El Salvador, June 3, 2008

My name is Jesus Martinez. I am director of Landmine Survivors Network in El Salvador. We work with landmine survivors and people with disabilities. I am a landmine survivor. I have been discussing together with my fellow survivors and my other colleagues in the ICBL the progress reached on victim assistance.

Once again landmine survivors are here, and we want to thank those organizations and governments who make our participation possible, thereby supporting the world movement to ban landmines. It's a good example to ensure that the landmine survivors are included in the activist campaign against landmines.

Last year we, here, reflected about the ten year anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty, and we also applauded the approval of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

However, today we would like to review the progress on the ground.

The time has passed, and we would really like to invite you to go beyond generalized speeches, that demonstrate the thousand marvels of each country in providing victim assistance, when conditions haven't sufficiently changed for people with disabilities.

We've also reflected about the government reports and we strongly believe that we would advance much farther if these were more specific and concrete in the information that they give, such as the reports given by Tajikistan, Albania, and Afghanistan.

Within the information that it is necessary to highlight:

You say things have improved – how have they specifically improved for landmine survivors and for persons with disabilities in general?

You say that you have a national law for people with disabilities. This is very positive, but it has to be implemented. You say that you signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and even ratified it. Additionally, the Cluster Munitions Convention has recently been adopted, which strengthens both the obligation to provide Victim Assistance and report in detail on progress. Both events are very significant progress, but, have to be implemented so that the lives of people with disabilities changes: We want to know how many accessible buses you have as a result? How many new ramps constructed?

You say that you have programs on economic opportunities. How many landmine victims went through such programs? How many people with disabilities joined the the workforce as a result of that?

You say that the government is implementing health programs. What kind of programs? Health? That's very general. How many new rehabilitation and prothesis centers were

established? How many opened in rural areas? Is it the government running the programs? Or NGOs doing it voluntarily? For us it is very important to know what the government itself runs and is responsible for. The NGOs are not the ones obligated to make progress under the Nairobi Plan.

You say that the government coordinates with the NGOs. What do you coordinate? And what is the result?

You say that you run community based rehabilitation programs. What is the result? How many survivors are benefited through this program?

We know that some of you are conducting census and including data collection on persons with disabilities as well. We applaud this step, but the important part is: What will you be doing with this information?

We strongly believe that we have an opportunity from now until the Second Review Conference to create concrete and specific reporting:

What the government is doing in each area? How? What kind of program? How many survivors are reached through each program?

During this week my colleagues and I will be participating in the discussions on tools and the indicators to measure progress, that are being developed by the co-chairs. We hope that all concerned states will participate as well, and look forward to a fruitful discussion. **It is critical to have these in place in the next Meeting of States Parties, so we could all prepare for the Second Review Conference.**

We will not tire of being vigilant for the rights of victims and raising our voices to bring about concrete change.

Thank you.