

Victim Assistance

Mr. Co-Chair,

I would like to provide some information about the projects supported by Austria in the field of victim assistance.

Austria has contributed to the annual appeal of the ICRC for victim assistance projects in Afghanistan with an amount of 800.000,- Euro.

In Nicaragua, Austria has an ongoing project for rehabilitation and Mine Risk Education of an Austrian NGO (Horizon 2000) in the Rio Coco area with an annual amount of approx. 85.000 Euro.

We have financed a social rehabilitation program in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Austrian NGO (Hope 87) with an amount of 120.000 Euro.

Furthermore, Austria supported in the last 2 years victim assistance projects in Uganda, Cambodia as well as the Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation through the ITF.

Austria does not have a separate budget for victim assistance programs. Our projects are funded from the special budget that was given to the Disarmament Department in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the wake of the successful treaty negotiations in 1997.

This brings me to the discussion of yesterday about integrating mine-action into the wider development agenda. In the case of possible Austrian programs for victim assistance, it would be important that mine-affected states include the care for mine-victims as part of their public health development priorities in their negotiations with the Austrian development agencies. The advantage of this would also be that our development programs usually have a multi-year time span, whereas our mine-action budget has to be approved every year which makes it much more difficult to make financial commitments for longer periods.

Austria has development co-operation programs with a number of mine-affected states, including Mozambique, the Great Lakes Region and Central American States, in particular Nicaragua.