



**STATEMENT BY MR. BARYAYEBWA HERBERT
AT THE TENTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES**

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*Madam President
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and gentlemen*

First of all, I would like to thank you for affording me an opportunity to present Uganda's status regarding the implementation of activities on victim assistance.

Uganda is currently going through resettlement and recovery after the end of insurgency. The years of conflict resulted into the presence of landmines and Explosives Remnants of War (ERW) in parts of Northern and to some extent Western Uganda which remain a threat and continue to kill or cause injuries to communities in these areas. Landmines and other ERW injuries require immediate and long term interventions including first access to first aid and emergency care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support to overcome the trauma of the explosion and social and economic empowerment.

In order to harmonise planning and implementation of programmes to assist the victims of landmines, a Comprehensive Plan on Victim Assistance for the period 2008 - 2012 was developed.

Following the new developments at the national and international scene, the comprehensive plan has been reviewed to align it with the National Development Plan, The Social Development Sector Investment Plan II, The Health Sector Strategic Plan III, The Education Sector Strategic Plan and the National Programme Plan of Action to implement the National Policy on Disability. The new Comprehensive on Victim Assistance Plan also took into account the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, the Cartagena Action Plan and the Cluster Munitions Convention.

The Workshop to review the Comprehensive Plan was organized by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development as the lead agency. The workshop brought together representatives from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, line Ministries, Disabled Peoples' Organisations, NGOs working with the disability sector and Associations of Landmine Survivors among others. The funding for the 2nd National Planning Workshop on Victim Assistance was obtained from the Government of Australia.

The outcome and recommendation from the 2nd Planning Workshop on Victim Assistance provided the foundation for drafting the revised Comprehensive Plan on victim Assistance for the period 2010 to 2014. This plan will help us to assess the achievements and challenges as we prepare for the Third Review Conference of States parties slated for 2014.

Fellow delegates, apart from coming up with reviewed Comprehensive Plan on Victim Assistance, Uganda has made strides in the area of data collection and management. The data collection tools have been harmonized and a coordinating body for point of reference for disability information has been established.

As regards healthcare, medical treatment has been provided to 700 landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities. The referral system has been strengthened through improved collaboration between healthworkers and Community Development Officers at Lower Local government level.

Fellow delegates, social inclusion of child survivors and other children with disabilities is being emphasized. Sports and recreation equipment were distributed to the inclusive schools in the mine affected districts.

Psychological support services are being conducted by community development workers.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in consultation with other stakeholders has developed accessibility guidelines.

In the area of economic empowerment, 190 survivors and other persons with disabilities have received vocational skills in various skills for employment creation. Livelihood support items such as ox-ploughs and other farm implements, sewing machines, carpentry kits and apiary kits have been distributed.

The Government of Uganda has provided special grants for persons with disabilities worth US \$ 1,500,000. The Special grants are expected to support groups of persons with disabilities including landmine survivors to start income generating activities.

In addition, the Government of Uganda has created an incentive to employers who employ persons with disabilities including landmine survivors. If 5% of the workers are persons with disabilities, the employer gets a tax reduction of 2%. This has motivated employers to take affirmative action in terms of employment of persons with disabilities.

Ladies and gentlemen, despite the achievements registered, Uganda still faces funding challenges in addressing the needs and rights of landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities. Let me take this opportunity to call upon development partners to join our effort to improve service delivery to landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

I would like to extend appreciation to the Government of Australia for the continued support. It is through such concerted effort that their lives will be improved.

Thank you for listening.