

THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS FOR HIGH LEVEL DELEGATES ON 28TH NOV 2011

President of 11th Meeting of States Parties, distinguished delegates, civil society organizations, mine action training institutions, donor representatives, ladies and gentlemen. Before I proceed, let me express my gratitude to the Government of Cambodia for hosting us in this beautiful City.

- ✓ Clearing mines restores people's dignity and livelihood, providing hope to the communities to re use the land, we must therefore, make all necessary efforts to facilitate people regain access to their land. Mr. President after years of insurgency, Uganda made a resolution to clear mines once the security situation became stable, I am glad to inform you that we have achieved significant progress in clearing mines in the affected areas and we are looking forward to the completion of this task in 2012.
- ✓ The Government of Uganda is committed to all efforts aimed at bringing peace to the people in the Great Lakes region and to Africa as a whole. This is the reason why we have deployed our army in Somalia to bring peace in that war torn country. When it comes to clearing mines and other explosive remnants of war, I should inform you that we now have a reasonable demining capacity and once declared free of mines, we shall avail our personnel and equipment to help some of our neighbors like South Sudan, Somalia etc when requested.
- ✓ I want to commend a number of partners who over the years have enabled us to build a strong national demining capacity through their generous contributions, these among others include; UNDP, the Danish Demining Group, Donor countries, the GICHD etc. The support generated has enabled us respond effectively.
- ✓ On land mine victims and survivors, Uganda pays special attention to the war survivors and disabled persons in general. We have in place a National Policy on Disability 2006 which puts in place mechanisms aimed at protecting the rights of disabled persons and prescribes processes for

representation of disabled persons at a political level, for example at the apex there is a Minister in charge of disabled persons, elected representatives in parliament per region and over 56,000 representatives at various local government levels.

- ✓ On the other hand we have a National Comprehensive Victim Assistance Plan 2010-14 which is in line with the Cartagena Action Plan which prioritizes rehabilitation and integration of victims in our society. Government has allocated significant amounts of money this F/Y to implement this plan. I welcome contributions from friends to fully implement the plan.
- ✓ As I end my remarks, I want to appeal to all nations of the world to stop using, manufacturing or engaging in any kind of trade in these deadly weapons which are known to kill and injure indiscriminately, let's all together make the world a better place.

Hon. Musa Ecweru

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND REFUGEES