

## **Update from Albania in the measures to implement the Cartagena Action Plan**

*Mr. President,*

*Distinguished Co-Chairs,*

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to outline the progress in Victim Assistance.

Based on the Cartagena and Vientiane Action Plans, Albania aligned and harmonized its victim assistance capacities and programs with the other National Strategies and policies for the people with disabilities are developed and have widely involved all victim assistance stakeholders, including survivors and other people with disabilities.

On a yearly basis, Albania is also launching the monitored results of the National Strategy for the People with Disabilities, where it analyses the progress of the work of the responsible actors for implementing the objectives of this strategy.

Other steps have been made regarding the health services. It is important to mention here the guidelines issued from Health Insurance Institute with the general practitioners/family doctors at Primary Health Care. This contract arrangement provides the obligations for medical home visits and all other relevant assistance for people with disabilities. Priority was given to the extension of the list of medicines available which treat the severe illnesses.

In terms of physical rehabilitation, several services have been provided to the landmine survivors and other amputees. The prosthetic workshop in Kukes Regional Hospital has provided major repairs and new prostheses for at least 80 amputees. Alongside the funding provided by the government for some materials to this workshop, there is a need of more funds to cover the services for all the amputees. Therefore, any financial assistance or donation on these materials and components would be welcomed.

The Albanian Ministry of Health continues to work in close cooperation with donors and other partners in improving the emergency, ongoing health care and the rehabilitation capacities. Those services are equally available to men, women, boys and girls both at local and national level.

In the area of the economic empowerment, there are 15 survivors or their family members who are currently attending vocational training courses and will be assisted with some financial assistance.

Data and detailed statistics on the casualties from mines/cluster munitions and hotspots are also available in Albania. These data are recorded in the IMSMA database and regularly shared with the relevant actors.

Albania is now undertaking a review of the disability-related legal and policy frameworks with the aim to assess their compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although there is good progress and achievements to date, Albania still faces challenges in addressing the needs and rights of the landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities. I would like to call on our development partners to continue their support to our efforts so we can further improve the lives of the people who are suffering the consequences of landmines.

Allow me at the end of my statement, to have the pleasure of expressing once again my gratitude to our partners, such as: UNDP, ITF Slovenia, GICHD, which have proved to be such an essential part of our program. Also, I would like to thank our loyal donors; the US State Department, European Commission, DfiD, the Government of France, ICRC, Handicap International and the Albania private sector, for their generous support which contributes to make a difference in people's lives.

I thank you for your attention!