

13 -MSP to the AP Mine Ban Convention

Assisting the Victims Plenary session

3 December 2013

Statement by Tajikistan

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present the progress of Tajikistan's Disability Support Unit (DSU) and to reconfirm our commitment in fulfilling the objectives of the Cartagena Action Plan!

In July 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between UNDP and the Ministry of labour and social protection of population (MLSPP). The memorandum includes support for the development of the State Program on social protection of persons with disabilities, and regional cooperation in order to strengthen the capacity of experts to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Tajikistan.

As a result of the agreement, in August 2013, the MLSPP launched a consultative process and developed the State Program on Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities, for the period 2014-2015 with technical support of UNDP – this involved an international and a national consultant as well. One of the objectives of the State Program, which will benefit all persons with disabilities (PWD) in Tajikistan, including landmine and other ERW survivors, is accession to the CRPD. The ultimate aim of the State Program is to provide an age and gender sensitive and rights-based foundation to promote the long-term physical, psychological, social and economic well-being of adults and children with disabilities, including mine and other ERW survivors, in Tajikistan.

The Programme was recently adopted by the MLSPP. Next stage is the submission of the State Program to the Coordination Council on the Social Protection of the PWD under the Government to seek approval. Meanwhile, the Research Institute of the Labor and Social Protection is conducting monitoring & evaluation workshops at the national and oblast levels to ensure a basis for the State Program understanding and implementation.

In June this year, TMAC coordinated meetings of Afghan experts with relevant Tajik ministries and international and non-governmental organizations. Later, in August, DSU organized a technical visit to Afghanistan with key staff from relevant ministries and the Tajikistan Campaign to Ban Landmines & Cluster Munitions (TCBL) to facilitate the sharing of experience with counterparts in relevant Afghan ministries and agencies. These meetings helped to strengthen relationships between the Tajikistan and

Afghanistan Disability Support and Mental Health Sectors and to support the development of a Regional Approach on Psycho-Social Rehabilitation for PWD.

With regards to physical rehabilitation: ICRC SFD is continuing technical and capacity building support to the National Orthopedic Center (NOC). In September 2013, the WHO launched a new project which aims to support the Government of Tajikistan to develop a National Rehabilitation Program and to strengthen national capacities. The project, which will be implemented in close collaboration between the MoH, MLSP, the ICRC, and NGO partners, will also strengthen and expand Community-based Rehabilitation activities in Tajikistan.

Since 2012, we started gathering detailed information on landmine/UXO casualties in cooperation with ICRC and RCST including on service provision. After TMAC's quality insurance of all collected data is being consequently transferred into the International Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). Survey is ongoing and is followed up by Individual Rehabilitation Plans for survivors and victims through ICRC's small grants and Micro-economic Initiatives (MEI). So far, we received 161 Needs Assessment and Victims' forms and 53 victims receive small grants from beginning of year.

In the area of socio-economic reintegration: in 2013 we revised our approach to the economic empowerment activities. The new approach aims to achieve improved access of PWD including Land Mine/ERW Survivors and victims' families to favorable loans with favorable terms and conditions and to business and agriculture development skills. So far we signed Standard MOU (Micro-Capital Grant Agreement For Credit Related Activities) with two Micro Credit Funds – "Rushdi Sugd" which is functioning in the mine-affected districts of Sugd region and "Fayzi Surkhob" – in Rasht valley. A national UNDP consultant will deliver vocational training to develop/upgrade business and other relevant skills.

The annual Summer Rehabilitation camp for 25 landmine survivors and other PWD (21 – males and 4 – females) from different regions of Tajikistan was organized during two weeks of August. It should be mentioned, that since 2005 it was the first inclusive to all PWD summer camp, which was organized in the Sughd oblast – north of Tajikistan. The camp was organized by Public organization «Tajikistan Centre to Ban Landmine and Cluster Munitions», with UNDP support and under the coordination of the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre.

Two-component VA project supported by the US Department of State was successfully implemented by Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSM). In the result 84 medical staff from 9 mine-affected districts received new skills and knowledge on provision of the psycho-social rehabilitation to PWD, including landmine survivors. Second component of project was about improvement of physical accessibility in Tajikistan. Two nominated sites – Dushanbe Child out-patient Clinic No12 and Haji Yaqob Mosque became

physically accessible. KAB surveys to estimate the effect of the construction on people's behavior were conducted twice - before and after reconstruction. Awareness training for users was conducted by national Disabled Peoples Organization after the work completion.

Peer to peer support continued: 80 PWDs (46 males and 34 females; 78 were PWD and 2 parents of PWD) participated in the five three-day training workshops conducted in four regional centers of Tajikistan (Khorog, Khujand, Garm, Kurgan-Tube) and in Dushanbe. All participants were trained and provided with mobile phones, SIM-cards with prepaid balance for 3 months. Newly trained peer-supporters are providing Peer to peer support not only to landmine survivors, but also to the people who recently received trauma or injury and become PWD in the hospitals and in the communities; already about 160 PWD were referred to the relevant existing services according to their needs and/or received psychological support as result of the Second phase of the project; awareness on the rights of PWD in Tajikistan is raised, targeted communities' authorities, the civil society and the neighborhood are sensitized about disability issues.

In the framework of cooperation with the MLSP, TMAC continues facilitating round tables, workshops and other advocacy activities with the aim of increasing the awareness of government ministries and agencies, and NGOs and public organisations, on the rights and needs of survivors and other PWD and to encourage ratification of the CRPD. Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan and Tajikistan Mine Action Centre /UNDP in cooperation with several UN agencies (UNOHCHR, UNICEF, UNDESA, UN Women) organized a public presentation of the Tajik translated version of the Handbook "ENABLE" - a Guidance for Parliamentarians in advocating the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol on November 22, 2013 in Dushanbe. There were in total 40 participants representing relevant Committees of Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan, Executive Office of President of RT, relevant Ministries and international and local NGOs, as well as NGOs of PWD, including NGOs of landmine survivors. Among other objectives of this event were: promoting the rights of PWD in Tajikistan and promoting the accession of the UNCRPD. The representatives of UN cooperating agencies emphasized to the Government of Tajikistan the importance of accession to the UNCRPD.

At the September 2013 TWG meeting a presentation on disability-inclusive development raised the awareness of members on the issue. Through TMAC's promotion of disability-inclusive development the potential for sustainability of victim assistance efforts at the community level is being enhanced.

Dear Excellencies, colleagues and friends!

I would like to express my gratitude to the ISU and to all our development partners – UNDP, BCPR, US Department of State, ICRC and its Special Fund for the Disabled and to Handicap International for their generous support which contributes to make a difference in people's lives.

Despite the progress and the achievements to date, challenges still remain in ensuring the long-term sustainability of efforts to address the needs and guarantee the rights of victims and survivors in the broader contexts of disability and development. With the planned transition of victim assistance to relevant government authorities by 2015, on-going technical and financial support is essential to ensure adequate capacities and appropriate facilities are available to effectively promote the inclusion and address the rights and needs of PWD, including survivors. Continued capacity building of survivors and other PWD is also necessary so they are empowered to claim their rights and as a consequence improve the quality of their daily lives.

Taking this opportunity I am calling to development partners to join our efforts so that we can further improve the lives of landmine victims and survivors and other PWD.

Thank you very much for your attention!