

Austria and Costa Rica

Thank you Mr. President,

I take the floor in my capacity as co-chair designate on victim assistance and our fellow co-chair Austria.

We take this opportunity to express our commitment to work together for and with victims of antipersonnel landmines. The principle of partnership is of utmost importance and therefore we need to hear all voices in this process, most notably the ones of survivors, their families and community members.

We have heard this week from the latest ICBL Monitor that the number of casualties from mines and ERW have further decreased. This is of course good news. It is a demonstration of the success of the convention. However, the number of victims is still increasing and child and female casualties have proportionally increased. Furthermore, many mine-affected countries and areas still lack an adequate data collection and many casualties remain unrecorded. [.

In order to keep the ribbon high, we believe that States Parties have to implement the Convention in its integrity and that also means in partnership with the whole Mine Ban community to address the challenges and needs with regard to victim assistance as a priority matter. As coordinators of victim assistance, we commit to engage with an ample and integrated approach and closely cooperate with the various stakeholders in the fields of development, human rights and disability that complement our work. It is important to increase the accessibility of victims to all their rights in a society and to provide assistance in accordance with their needs

Victim Assistance is no doubt one of the pillars of the convention. Assistance to victims has to continue even when other commitments will have been fulfilled. Next year in Maputo we have the opportunity to further strengthen the implementation in this field. In that regard, I would like to announce that on Wednesday, Austria and Costa Rica, together with Mozambique and ICBL, will host a side event where we will have the opportunity to reflect how to make VA more effective. This informal meeting aims at engaging interested Experts and stakeholders in a discussion on the priorities that the 3rd Review Conference of the Anti Personnel Mine Ban Convention in 2014 should highlight in the area of victim assistance.

Mr. President, Austria and Costa Rica would like to use the co-chair role to facilitate this process and take a realistic and solution oriented approach, an integrated approach aiming in the long run for victim assistance measures to be integrated in the broader human rights, disability and assistance measures to be integrated in the broader human rights, disability and development programs while ensuring that provisions of the Convention are implemented and that victims receive the adequate assistance according to their needs and rights.

Thank you.