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Statement
On Victim Assistance

by
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at the
Fifteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the
Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-
Personnel Mines and on their Destruction

Santiago de Chile, 28 November – 1 December 2016

Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to thank the Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance for the presentation of the conclusions and recommendations related to the mandate of the Committee on Victim Assistance.

I would like to align myself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to make the following remarks.

Slovenia has always attached great importance to victim assistance. For us, mine victim assistance always represented one of the true embodiments of the spirit of the Convention. We are pleased with the fact that casualties from mine incidents have decreased significantly since the entry into force of the Ottawa Convention. From our point of view this is one of the biggest successes of the Convention.

We are also pleased that technology and methods for mine detection and clearance continue to improve. This is extremely important for speeding up the process of mine clearance and for continuing with the reduction of mine victims more quickly.

Mr President,

I would also like to underline the importance of victim assistance, which is a long-term commitment to all victims and their families and often means lifetime care. We need to ensure their social and economic reintegration and full participation in all spheres of the society on an equal basis and in a sustainable way.

In this regard, we highlight the importance of promoting cooperation and synergies with other international instruments, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and Cluster Munitions Convention (CMC).

There are important challenges ahead of us, including in the field of improvised explosive devices. Slovenia is concerned by the record of victims in this specific area.

Slovenia has been active in the area of mine victim assistance also through the ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF), established in March 1998 by the Slovenian Government to help solving humanitarian crises caused by anti-personnel mines and other unexploded remnants of war in our neighbouring region of South-Eastern Europe. Outstanding results in the countries of the region have encouraged further engagement and today the ITF is actively engaged in many other mine-affected regions and countries in the world.

The ITF has always been among the priorities of the Slovenian Government. The Slovenian Government continues to support the ITF politically, financially and with in-kind contributions. Slovenia has been allocating funds for the ITF work and projects on an annual basis. Through ITF, Slovenia has together with other donors, responded to the needs of children and adults affected by conflicts in different states and regions in the world.

The ITF has, in cooperation with the Slovenian Red Cross and experts of the Slovenian National Institute for Rehabilitation, implemented a number of projects, focused on providing medical and psychosocial rehabilitation of victims, especially children, from Gaza Strip, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, etc. So far, the ITF assisted more than 1.250 mine victims. We believe this is a case of good practice.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise that Slovenia will continue to pay special attention to the very important issue of victim assistance.

I thank you Mr. President.