



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Victim Assistance

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Intersessional meetings
7 – 8 June 2018, Geneva, Switzerland**

Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Afghanistan has a large number of victims and persons with disabilities. Civilians continued to suffer the effects of armed conflicts in Afghanistan throughout 2017 and 2018. In 2017, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) has documented 10,453 civilian casualties including 3,438 deaths and 7,015 injured. In year 2017, alone from landmines, ERW and Improvised Explosive Devices, Afghanistan had an average of 181 civilian casualties per month, which was recorded the highest number since 2001, after the fall of the Taliban. Unfortunately, a large number of civilian casualties has been recorded in 2018 as well. In the first three-months of 2018, 2,258 civilian casualties have been documented by UNAMA related to the ongoing armed conflicts out of which 410 casualties belonged to the incidents of Explosive Remnants of War and Pressure Plate Improvised Mines. In late May, an ERW left from the fighting went off on a group of children in the southern province of Nangarhar, resulting in the death of four and injuries of seven more. The seven survivors were

from one family, three brothers and four of their first cousins, everyone of them either lost one or two legs.

The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled leads the VA and disability affairs at national level while ministry of health plays a key role in provision of health care for victims and persons with disabilities.

Since the last intersession meeting, the following activities have been carried out in Afghanistan in support of victims and persons with disabilities.

The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination provides technical support to the said ministry on the following fields:

- The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination of the State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs has been providing technical support to the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyred and Disabled (MoLSAMD) in the development of the national strategy on VA and disability - it that will help the Governments' related departments, aid organizations and civil society to deliver the VA and disability related services in a coordinated and effective manger
- DMAC has assisted the MoLSAMD in the development of a national database on VA and disability issues for the said ministry to systematically store the data on victims and persons with disabilities and record, in a centralized manner, the information on services provided and interventions made by various players in this sector
- DMAC is providing technical assistance in preparation of a comprehensive capacity development plan for the MoLSAMD aiming at enhancing their

technical and institutional capabilities for better leadership and coordination of VA and disability affairs at national level

- DMAC is assisting the MoLSAMD in the development of a website for VA and disability affairs as a tool for advocacy and publicity
- Several efforts are ongoing to avoid civilian casualties causing by landmines, ERW and IEDs. DMAC has signed Memorandum of Understandings with different relevant ministries including Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information and Culture, Ministry of Telecommunication for coordinating joint Risk Awareness campaigns through media, telephonic text messages and other existing modalities.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan will continue with its efforts to further fulfil our obligations towards victims and persons with disabilities and to improve their lives.

Taking the opportunity, I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to the generous donors who have supported the victim assistance activities in Afghanistan. The assistance you provided has helped improve the lives of mine and ERW survivors and other persons with disabilities.

Thank you.