



THE UNITED NATIONS MINE ACTION

Statement by Lisa Oldring, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN Mine Action Team support to the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

On behalf of the UN Mine Action Team to the Inter-sessional Meeting of States Parties
23-27 April

Thank you Co-Chairs and good morning to distinguished delegates and participants.

The United Nations Mine Action Team wishes to recall its expression of support for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities made in its intervention on Tuesday. Today, we would like to further highlight the ways in which the Convention reinforces and supplements the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty and to outline how the UN Mine Action Team hopes to contribute to making the new Convention a living tool.

The success of the Convention to date is, in part, a testament to the Mine Ban Treaty. The monitoring process established for the Convention, involving meetings of State Parties, drew on lessons from the Treaty. And landmine survivors, affected States, and the mine action community at large played a critical role in making it the fastest negotiated human rights treaty in history, and potentially, one of the most quickly to come into force. It is of note that in this historic year, the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty falls on December 3, the International Day of Disabled Persons.

The United Nations Mine Action Team strongly encourages all States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty to move quickly towards ratification, and then implementation, of the new Convention in fulfillment of Action 33 on victim assistance of the Nairobi Action Plan. We are working with Landmine Survivors Network to provide all UN-managed and supported mine action programmes with ratification kits to assist Member States in this regard.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities does not create new rights, but rather outlines how States must meet existing civil, economic, political, social, and cultural rights of persons with disabilities. It is our aim to promote the rights of persons affected by mines and explosive remnants of war using all relevant human rights norms. In fact, an indicator of progress towards the development of national capacity for the United Nations Mine Action Team is the extent to which the rights of affected persons are reflected in the work of all human rights treaty bodies.

For States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, the United Nations Mine Action Team encourages the use of the new Convention as a guidance tool on how to meet the victim assistance obligations under Article 6 of the Treaty. As you have heard, the Convention provisions complement the six elements of victim assistance, and the commitments in the Nairobi Action Plan, by illuminating requirements in all areas - such as data and statistics, personal mobility, habilitation and

rehabilitation, the rights to an adequate standard of living, to work and to equal recognition before the law, and obligations to ensure integration into national legislation and policy. And it promotes the active engagement of persons with disabilities in all decisions that affect them. These provisions are helpful to States, and those who support States in meeting their obligations, as they not only detail in greater depth what States need to do, but also how to undertake victim assistance in a manner that respects and maximizes the rights of landmine survivors.

For our part, we plan to provide UN-managed and supported mine action programmes with guidance and tools to assist them in familiarizing themselves with the Convention, raise awareness among affected communities, and support States in the ratification process. And we recognize that UN-managed and supported mine action programmes have a role to play in supporting the implementation of the Convention. The data collected by programmes on casualty rates should feed into national planning and the development of policies on the rights of persons with disabilities under Article 31 of the Convention. Data from mine action programmes can also make an important contribution to effective monitoring of the implementation of the Convention. In the area of coordination, mine action centers will be supported to do more - to increase collaboration with and support to institutions and organizations that work on disability issues generally, in line with the recommendation of the Geneva Report, and to enhance inclusion of landmine survivors, and persons with disabilities generally in national planning and budgeting on mine action, in accordance with Article 4 of the Convention.

In sum, there is much that can be done by the United Nations Mine Action Team to support States Parties of the Mine Ban Treaty in the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. And we look forward to working with States and affected communities to this end.

Thank you.