Mr Chairman,

With regard to the question of victim assistance and socio economic reintegation, I wish to draw the attention of the Committee on the latest developments of Italy’s action. In addition to the Italian contributions to the 2003 Humanitarian Demining Fund for mine clearance and victim assistance (2.58 million Euro), we wish to notify the following additional efforts:

- 2,946 million Euro or mine clearance in Iraq;
- 25,000 Euro from for victim assistance in Croatia;
- 60,670 Euro favour of the American States Organization for victim assistance in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

As for 2004, Italy is oriented to maintain the general 2003 guidelines and give priority to those countries with more serious humanitarian emergencies caused by the presence of mines and which are located in sensitive areas such Sub-Saharan Africa, Balkans, Middle East. More details on funding for the current year will be given during the second session of the Standing Committees.

Furthermore 8.55 million Euro have been allocated for the 2004-2006 refinancing of the Humanitarian Demining Fund.

Thank you Mr. Chairman