Statement of the Government of JAPAN
at the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration,
23rd June, 2004, Geneva

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen

1. Empowerment of Victims
   The Gov. of Japan attaches importance to Victim Assistance. This year, Japan
   funded a project for Landmine Victims Assistance and Mine Risk Education in
   Yemen (approximately 437,000USD). Last year the Gov. of Japan also assisted
   Victim Assistance project; Japan funded approximately 55,000USD through
   Japanese NOG to support a project which was aimed to provide medical treatment
   to landmine survivors in Cambodia.

   In this context, my delegation would like to draw your attention to the view of
   “empowerment of victims” through which Socio-Economic reintegration will be
   promoted. As my delegation stated yesterday, “Human Security” is one of the
   important pillars of our foreign policies, and “empowerment of people” as well as
   “protection of people” are pivotal concepts underlying it.

   Therefore, my delegation would like to appreciate initiatives taken by ICBL and
   its member organizations in which landmine survivors are involved in advocacy,
   Mine Risk Education, and/or assisting other victims, including peer counseling.

   Providing prosthesis and other artificial limbs is, without doubt, essential part of
   victim assistance, but NOT a final goal of Victim Assistance. When we discuss about
   Victim Assistance, we should not forget a very important viewpoint: how can we
   empower each individual victim? My delegation would like to emphasize on
   importance of this question.

   Needless to say, in order to empower victims, long term approach is indispensable.
   It should be recalled that adult amputees need prostheses replaced every three to
   five years and children need them replaced every 6-12 months according to the
   analysis of the ICRC.

2. Holistic approach
   While my delegation emphasizes on importance of viewpoint of “empowerment of
   victims”, my delegation would like also to emphasize on importance of holistic
   approach in victim assistance.

   In many mine affected countries, most of landmine victims lives in poverty and
   have little access to hospital and other social services. This is threatening human
security of those people. Therefore, holistic approach, or in other words, “empowerment of community as a whole” is vital in Victim Assistance and this will definitely help and accelerate achieving sustainable development of this society.

In this context, my delegation would like to introduce one of our latest and unique assistance so as to empower community eventually relating to mine action; The Gov. of Japan funded 49,000USD to the Project for Rehabilitating Demined Areas through Planting Trees in Lebanon. Of course, this does not diminish the importance of mine clearance and assistance of victims in direct manner and the Gov. of Japan is very pleased to renew its commitment to assistance of these kinds of mine actions. What my delegation wants to say here is that the Gov. of Japan considers this kind of effort (the Project for Rehabilitating Demined Areas through Planting Trees) is also important in mine action, especially if we have longer and wider view on mine action, in particular view on relationship between mine action and sustainable development.

Thank you very much for your attention.