



**Intervention by Saleh Al-Dahyani, on behalf of Raising the Voice Participants
Landmine Survivors Network
Wednesday, June 23, 2004
Meetings of Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Integration
of the Mine Ban Treaty**

Accessibility

Madam Co-chair, Mr.Co-chair and distinguished delegates,
Allow me to address you on behalf of the survivors from across the world, the family that has fallen victim to this blind weapon that does not discriminate between young, old, man or woman.

The consequences of this weapon are loss of limb, sight, life, or multiple mutilations that lead to problems preventing victims from practicing their daily life and living independently. Article 6.3 of the Mine Ban Treaty calls for the social and economic reintegration of landmine survivors. Social and economic reintegration can only happen if the world we live in is accessible.

Accessibility is important in the daily life of persons with disabilities, whether collecting water, going to school, trying to get to work, trying to get a job, or participating in international events such as the Nairobi Summit.

That is why this category of individuals requires various types of adaptations that we urge be taken into account the world over. Adaptations we would like to see:

- Accessibility to public places for all disability types, including hotels, public bathrooms, government buildings, lifts, hospitals, schools and so on
- Ensuring assistance at airports, including assisting with immigration requirements
- Adaptation of pavements and streets to allow for wheelchair access, vocal signs for the blind and sight impaired
- Accessibility in communication and information (including conference documents), such as telephone, computer software, audio cassettes, CDs Braille and so on

We address you, hoping that the right to accessibility will be taken seriously by your countries and your organizations, and that effective measures including changes to law and public policies are undertaken immediately to ensure the safe and proper access of persons with disabilities so we can participate in society.

International treaties include these rights, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the United Nations Standard Rules of the Equalization of Opportunities, particularly rule 5. In addition, the draft UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes strong provisions on integration, independent living and accessibility, which should be supported by your governments.

Thank you for your attention.