

**Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and
Socio-Economic Reintegration**

Intervention by Mr. Magnus Carlquist (Sweden)

23 June 2004

Madame Chairlady,

Last year the Swedish Government, like many of our donor partners, increased the disbursements to Mine Action substantially. (In our case with more than 50%). Unfortunately that did not mean that the world became safer during the year, that more people lived without threat of mines or UXOs at the end of 2003. The need of Mine Action had, contrary to our hopes, become bigger at the end of the year than in the beginning. More people had become mine victims.

I would like to take this possibility to brief you about the Swedish policy with regards to victim assistance or the support to people with disabilities no matter of the cause of the disability. A key element in the policy is synergy of commitments and synergy of actions.

Sweden has been an active partner in the work to create an International Convention on the full and equal enjoyment of all Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms by Persons with Disabilities. There are four principles which we share with the members of the European Union underlying our approach: These are non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, autonomy and participation and inclusion. As the EU has expressed consistently international human rights instruments already apply in their entirety to persons with disabilities. But evidence has shown that persons with disabilities still face denials of their rights. The main focus of that convention must therefore be to bring about a

Check against delivery

situation where persons with disabilities can enjoy the full range of human rights without any discrimination.

As we have explained before in this audience The Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) does not keep track of the amount given to mine victims but makes some estimations of development co-operation which is directly targeted to people with disabilities. This support has increased steadily over the years. Since the 1980s our policy has been that support to **all development-programmes** should consider the **rights** of disabled people to enjoy their fundamental freedoms. Needless to say, mine victims are an integrated part of this approach. This policy puts the rights of individuals to participate fully in society in focus and our ambition has for a long time been that this aspect **should be mainstreamed and integrated into all forms of development assistance**, be it health, education, infrastructure etc.

A fully developed partnership promotes mainstreaming and avoids earmarking. Mainstreaming means difficulties to track specific areas, projects or target groups. It is a pedagogical problem. Sweden would welcome a more flexible reporting system within the Ottawa treaty process taking these pedagogical problems into consideration.

To support and monitor the Swedish policy Sida has a disability adviser based in Stockholm. The adviser supports Sida-staff as well as field offices and embassies and also deals with capacity building among partners. I would be happy to informally tell more about this function to those who have a specific interest.

Thank you,