

AI 4

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

26 May 2009

New Zealand Statement

Thank you Mr co-Chair

Mr co-Chair, New Zealand welcomed an opportunity to hold a position as co-Chair of this Standing Committee until last year and we are very pleased that the ongoing work of this important Committee is now in the good hands of Belgium and Thailand.

The effective provision of assistance to landmine survivors, their families and communities continues to be a key pillar of New Zealand's efforts to promote the objectives of the Mine Ban Convention.

It is essential that no person affected by landmines is left unsupported and New Zealand remains committed to doing its part to contribute to this aim. We urge all other countries in a position to do so to provide the necessary assistance to victims and their communities as they work to rebuild their livelihoods.

It remains New Zealand's view that such assistance needs to be sustainable. If appropriately targeted, this assistance can serve as a means of empowering communities affected by explosive remnants of war.

We also recognise that a strong co-operative partnership with local communities and non-governmental organizations contributes to the ongoing success of these projects. It is therefore important that all stakeholders have a shared ownership of the work being undertaken.

New Zealand's current contributions reflect our recognition of the essential role that assistance can play in strengthening broader development objectives.

In recent years New Zealand has been active in the Asian region contributing to projects which aim to provide vocational training, build capacity and to assist establish sustainable, long-term industries in affected states. We have also been pleased to support the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF and other humanitarian organizations to assist landmine victims.

The elements I have mentioned above will continue to guide New Zealand's contributions in this area.

Thank you Mr co-Chair