



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration

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Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to present the progress and the challenges of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in implementing the Cartagena Action Plan and other national disability and VA programs in Afghanistan.

Since the formulation of the Cartagena Action Plan in 2010 I am happy to inform you that three international disability related conventions have been ratified by my government. They are:

1. The ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Disabled Persons Convention ratified in 2010,
2. The Convention on Cluster Munitions CCM ratified in September 2011
3. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol ratified in September 2012

As well as ratification of these conventions, in 2010 the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan enforced national legislation entitled "*Law on the Rights and Benefits of Disabled Persons*". Currently the law is under review to bring it into conformity with the CRPD.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled is the government's disability focal point and along with other key stakeholders such as the Ministries

of Public Health and Education and national and international agencies this ministry has continued to provide services and support to persons with disabilities including mine and ERW victims.

Currently the government is revising the Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan which expired in 2011. The revision will take into consideration international and national disability right obligations including VA as integral part of the action plan. This revision is currently taking place in close collaboration with international and national NGOs and other stakeholders.

The ANDAP progress report shows that out of 158 action points, stakeholders achieved 78, demonstrating that over half of the disability action plan was implemented successfully. Failure to deliver 100% results from challenges associated with security, finance and lack of capacity.

In terms of concrete achievements, we have made great strides in inclusive education to support the educational rights of children with disabilities. This year Ministry of Education trained 1200 school teachers, 1800 children with disabilities and their parents on inclusive education which seeks to fulfill the rights of all learners to quality education.

The Ministry of Public Health has also approved a Disability and Physical Rehabilitation Strategy to further professionalize and prioritize disability and rehabilitation programs within the ministry. This strategy, the first of its kind, will seek to improve social inclusion of persons with disability, enhance provision of

early treatment to children with severe disabilities and increase prevention measures that target avoidable causes of disability.

While there is tangible progress as described above there are significant challenges in funding, security, capacity and sustainability of our efforts. Our caseload is large – due in part to the significant number of landmine and ERW victims – and our physical infrastructure is limited. We need to bolster our methods of monitoring and evaluating existing services. And we need to do more to ensure that those with disability enjoy their rights.

To this end we will continue to strive to achieve our obligations towards persons with disabilities and to improve the lives of all Afghan mine and ERW survivors and other persons with disabilities. We hope that we will receive the support and solidarity of the international community engaged in the area of VA.

The Government of Islamic of Afghanistan would like to acknowledge the continuous and generous support extended by all the donors to date.

Thank you.