



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

13 MSP TO THE AP MINE BAN CONVENTION: 2ND – 6TH DECEMBER 2013

STATEMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN UGANDA

BY: Mr. Matata Twaha
Second Secretary
Permanent Mission of Uganda.

Mr. President

Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to be afforded an opportunity to report on the progress made by the Republic of Uganda in the implementation of the Victim Assistance Programme for Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) survivors.

Following new developments at International and Local scene, a decision was taken to review the Comprehensive Plan on Victim Assistance 2008-2012 to realign it with the Cartagena Action Plan 2012-2014, National Development Plan (NDP). Uganda is therefore currently implementing the Comprehensive Plan on Victim Assistance 2012-2014. This plan is being used to measure progress on the implementation of activities on victim assistance in line with the Cartagena Action Plan.

As regards data collection, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) in consultation with other stakeholders developed a standardized disability data correction tool. This tool was used to conduct a baseline survey in Northern Uganda to establish the incidence and needs of survivors of landmines. Other surveys and needs assessments on landmine survivors have been conducted by Handicap International and Uganda Landmine Survivors Association.

Fellow delegates, progress has been made in the area of laws and policies. The Persons with Disabilities Act (2006) has been reviewed to ensure that it complies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The National Council for Disability Amendment Bill (2011) has been passed by Parliament.

The process of reviewing the National Policy on disability has been embarked on to align it with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP).

As regards emergency response, progress has been made in the training of Village Health Teams (VHTs) on Emergency First Aid Uganda. More interventions are included in the Health Sector Strategic Investment Plan III (HSSP) for the period 2012-2015. However, it is important to note that the (HSSP) is not fully funded and is impacting on the level of services available for landmine survivors and other PWDs.

Progress is being made in the area of special needs education. Special Needs Education teachers are being trained and there is a budget line for specialized equipment for learners with disabilities. Progress is also being made in the area of strengthening peer support networks particularly through the work of Uganda Landmine Survivors Association members at district level. Through the Mine Victim Assistance Project, 64 Community Development Workers and Rehabilitation Officers have been trained in psychosocial support. A training Manual on Psychosocial Support was developed by the MGLSD to guide the trainers in psychosocial support to survivors is still being used

In terms of economic empowerment, progress is being made through small scale income generating activities. The most significant achievement is the implementation of the Governments countrywide Special Grants for Persons with Disabilities. The grants which are disbursed to the district level are available to PWDs groups of 15 – 30 to undertake income generating activities. Landmine survivors are among the beneficiaries and at least 24 landmine survivor groups have accessed the support in Kasese and districts in Northern Uganda.

As regards coordination, the national Intersectoral Committee on Disability was formed and is chaired by the MGLSD. This Committee brings together line Ministries and Civil Society Organisations. This has provided a forum for sharing experience and minimizing duplication of effort.

It should be noted that child survivors in Uganda have specific and additional needs in all aspects of assistance. For example, children whose injuries result in amputated limbs require more complicated rehabilitative assistance. They need to have prostheses made more often as they grow, and may require corrective

surgery for the changing shape of a residual limb (stump). This calls for constant support from the various stakeholders.

Although Government in conjunction with other stakeholders has achieved progress. There is still a lot to be done in order to realize more progress. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to call upon development partners to provide more support to the Victim Assistance Programme for survivors of landmine and Explosive Remnants of war. It is through such concerted effort that the rights and needs of persons with disabilities will be progressively realized.

Thank you for listening.