

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
17th Meeting of States Parties**

**Agenda Item 9a – Victim Assistance
Statement of Australia**

Thank you Madame President.

Australia's approach to supporting Victim Assistance is focused on crosspollination between the conventions on landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war with disability and human rights organisations.

We are an advocate for the development of common approaches to victim assistance across conventions to avoid duplication of effort.

There is also a need for victims and survivors to be **self-sufficient** in order to financially support themselves and their families.

Employment is first among four key factors in helping victims achieve self-sufficiency. The others being education, employment, housing, and transportation.

For long-term sustainability, there is a need to ensure that this assistance is integrated into, and delivered as part of broader national policies and programs.

In **designing and delivering** victim assistance programs, it is important to ensure that the voice of victims influence policy and program delivery and to take into account gender and diversity issues.

In order to ensure sustainable support for victims, it is essential to deliver victim assistance in a **non-discriminatory manner** through specific initiatives, as well as through broader development, human rights and humanitarian efforts under national plans, policies and frameworks.

This approach to victim assistance, involving both specific and broader efforts, represents **an integrated approach** to victim assistance.

Recognising the importance of integration, we contributed \$600,000 to support an initiative by **Humanity and Inclusion** to support States to implement an integrated approach to victim assistance. The funding enabled Humanity and Inclusion to support the development of the **Guidance on an Integrated Approach to Victim Assistance**.

The Guidance highlights good practices and national examples that demonstrate that an integrated approach is feasible. We see the Guidance as a vital useful tool for States Parties to this convention, the Cluster Munitions Convention and Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, in assisting them to provide non-discriminatory and sustainable assistance that improves the quality of life and upholds the rights of victims.

We take this opportunity to underscore Australia's continued support for an integrated approach to victim assistance going forward.

Thank you Madam Vice President.