

Joint Address

by

Afghanistan and Switzerland, in-coming Co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration

6^e Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines

30 November 2005, Zagreb

(For Afghanistan: , H.E., Vice-Minister Dr. M. Heider Reza:)

Madame Co-chair, Delegates of State Parties to the Convention, Representatives of Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the first Review conference of the Mine ban Treaty in Nairobi, the State Parties asked Afghanistan and Switzerland to serve as Co-Chair of this Standing Committee. We are therefore both pleased and honoured to be taking over this responsibility from the 2005 Co-Chairs, Nicaragua and Norway, and intend to ensure continuity in 2006 with the important efforts they have initiated.

Today, Afghanistan and Switzerland would like to briefly outline the approach and the strategy they plan to follow during the period of their Co-Chair. The intended course of action is based on the Nairobi Action Plan, with particular emphasis on Articles 29 to 36, and will focus on the needs of the twenty-four State parties that have reported significant numbers of mine victims. Furthermore, this strategy builds on the objectives set by the 2005 Co-Chairs, Norway and Nicaragua. Indeed, Afghanistan and Switzerland intend to ensure an appropriate follow-up in the implementation of these objectives by carrying out a number of activities initiated in 2005, while supplementing them with some novel initiatives and approaches.

Afghanistan and Switzerland intend to make the best use of the limited time of their mandate as Co-Chairs by contributing to the impetus given by Nicaragua and Norway, with the invaluable assistance of the Implementation Support Unit. In this respect specific attention will be paid toward the establishment in the 24 relevant State Parties of national Action Plans for Victim Assistance as a continuation of the impressive work done by these 24 countries in establishing victim assistance objectives this year.

(For Switzerland: H.E. Amb. Dr. J. Streuli)

Switzerland, together with Mexico, already served as Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance from Lay 1999 to September 2000 and had committed considerable resources for helping the victims of anti-personnel mines, in the wake of the 1998 Bern Manifesto and the 1999 Swiss Strategy, presented in Maputo at the First Member State Parties Conference Both this documents emphasise equity in access to services, sustainability, and country ownership. This approach favoured by Switzerland has been integrated in the Nairobi Action Plan.

Therefore, the incoming Co-Chairs propose- besides the continuation of the commenced action with the 24 countries initiative - to initiate a number of specific activities, in line with the Nairobi Action Plan, with a focus on the following three issues:

- Firstly, identifying and promoting best practices for access to, and quality of medical care;
- Secondly, carrying out cases studies on inter-ministerial coordination in Mine Victim Assistance, using the experience of Afghanistan as a starting point; and
- Thirdly, identifying and proposing best practices on social and economic re-integration of all victims.

With these efforts, the Co-Chairs hope to contribute, albeit in a modest way, to more efficient Mine Victim Assistance and to improved respect for the rights of survivors and their families.

Thank you for your attention.