

EIGHTH MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

Dead Sea, Jordan, 18-22 November 2007

**General status of implementation of the *Nairobi Action Plan*
in relation to victim assistance**

**Statement by Sudan
Co-Chair of the
Standing Committee on
Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration**

21 November 2007

Mr President
Excellencies
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

In collaboration with my Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, Markus Reiterer of Austria, it is my pleasure to open this session on Assisting the Victims.

Since the First Review Conference in 2004, the aim of all the Co-Chairs of this Standing Committee has been to ensure the successful implementation of the Convention and to facilitate concrete progress in achieving the aims of the *Nairobi Action Plan* before the Second Review Conference in 2009, with particular focus on the 24 States Parties that have reported responsibility for significant numbers of landmine survivors.¹

Efforts undertaken by all Co-Chairs since 2005 are based on the logic that the ultimate responsibility of meeting the rights and needs of landmine survivors within a particular state rests with that state. No external actor can define for it what can or should be achieved by when and how in meeting the needs of these survivors. Others may have the ability to assist in understanding challenges, developing and monitoring the effectiveness and implementation of

¹ Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uganda, and Yemen.

plans. However, real and sustainable progress rests with sovereign states articulating in their own voices their challenges and plans to overcome them. Furthermore, what can or should be achieved by when and how will be different for each of these 24 States Parties, given their unique characteristics.

All Co-Chairs have recognized that the best way to assure progress is to work intensively, on a national basis, with relevant States Parties. With funding provided by Australia, Austria, Norway and Switzerland, the Implementation Support Unit assists the Co-Chairs to achieve their aim of ensuring the successful implementation of the Convention in relation to victim assistance. Through the Implementation Support Unit, the Co-Chairs provide some level of support to all 24 relevant States Parties in the form of advice each may wish to consider in improving on their efforts to establish SMART objectives and a national plan. Advice is based on the principles that victim assistance efforts should not exclude any person injured or disabled in another manner; that assistance should be viewed as a part of a country's overall public health and social services systems and human rights frameworks; and, providing assistance should be seen in a broader context of development and underdevelopment. In addition, at the request of relevant States Parties, in-country *process support* is available to advance the State's inter-ministerial efforts to establish better objectives and develop and implement good plans. Since 2006, *process support* visits have been undertaken in 19 of the 24 relevant States Parties, including 14 in 2007.

Many of these States Parties will provide an update to this meeting but a summary of some of the key advances since the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties include:

- In response to Action #39 of the *Nairobi Action Plan*, at the April 2007 standing committee meetings, 17 of 23 relevant States Parties participating in the meeting included a victim assistance expert in their delegation. An ambitious parallel programme increased the knowledge of the expert participants on victim assistance in the context of the

Convention, emphasized the place of victim assistance in the broader contexts of disability, health care, social services, and development, reaffirmed the importance of key principles adopted by the States Parties in 2004, and reaffirmed key challenges. At least 19 health, rehabilitation and social services professionals from 17 relevant States Parties are participating in the 8MSP. I am personally grateful that the sponsorship programme Donors' Group had the foresight to earmark funding for this purpose. I am also aware of at least 30 mine survivors who are playing an important role, both here at the Dead Sea and in their countries, in advancing the aims of the Convention. Over the past few days, these experts participated in a parallel program focused on the issue of victim assistance. My Co-Chair will provide more information in his closing remarks.

- Since the 7MSP, workshops to develop a national victim assistance plan of action were convened in Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Sudan, and Uganda. Afghanistan and Albania convened workshops to review progress in implementing 2006 plans of action and have developed, or are in the process of developing, revised objectives and plan of action. And in Ethiopia, workshops were held to discuss victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention.
- Inter-ministerial processes to develop and/or implement, a comprehensive plan of action to meet objectives are reported in Afghanistan, Angola, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, El Salvador, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Uganda.
- Several States Parties have reported the achievement of objectives or ongoing activities underway to achieve the objectives.
- The Convention's Documentation Centre now includes a quantity of victim assistance-related resources.
- And finally, as of 20 November 2007, 87 of the 117 State signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention,

including 14 of the 24 States Parties reporting responsibility for significant numbers of landmine survivors. Seven States have ratified the Convention, including Croatia.

To conclude, 2007 is a significant year in the life of the Convention. Not only are we celebrating the 10th anniversary but 2007 also marks half way between the First and Second Review Conferences. Austria and Sudan is pleased to present to this meeting the *Mid-Term Review of the Status of Victim Assistance in the Context of the AP Mine Ban Convention and the Nairobi Action Plan in the 24 Relevant States Parties*. This document provides an overview of the known status of progress in the development of SMART victim assistance objectives and national plans since the First Review Conference in 2004. The document also outlines the lessons learnt and challenges that remain in implementing the Convention and achieving the aims of the *Nairobi Action Plan* in relation to victim assistance. As the document is around 80 pages long, it will be made available on the website or by request.

Thank you.