

## **Meetings of the Standing Committees of MBT – Geneva**

Thursday 24 June 2010 – 17:15-18:00 (Updates on other developments and initiatives in support of the application of the victim assistance aspects of the CAP)

### ***Updates on ICBL's post Cartagena Victim Assistance Activities***

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At the Cartagena Summit, States Parties reaffirmed their commitment to promote and protect the rights of mine survivors, and address the needs of mine victims by providing enhanced quality services to all victims based on their needs and priorities.

On the part of the ICBL's victim assistance focal points (VAFPs), work to ensure implementation of the CAP started at the summit itself and has been ongoing since then. The VAFPs are campaign members, survivors, practitioners and representatives of people with disabilities' organizations, who volunteered to take up a responsibility at the national level, in partnership with the ICBL, to advocate for victim assistance in countries with significant numbers of survivors. The ultimate goal of the VAFPs is to help other survivor and persons with disabilities in affected communities and villages in their countries. The VAFP network currently has 37 members in 30 countries, including 25 States Parties.

At the Cartagena Summit, in the Survivors' Call to Action, survivors and other persons with disabilities committed to continue sharing their knowledge and participating in the planning, implementation and monitoring of victim assistance efforts under the Mine Ban Treaty.

Putting this promise into practice early in 2010, VAFPs in over 15 countries developed advocacy plans with measurable objectives, aiming at concrete changes in the lives of victims. Objectives and activities include, for example, the integration of peer support into the Ministry of Public Health's package of services in Afghanistan, through technical support and training provided by the Afghan Landmine Survivors Organization, or the empowerment and inclusion of women survivors into community life through awareness-raising sessions on human rights organized by the Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions.

Several VAFPs already reached some of their goals in the first half of the year, as Ethiopia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Senegal adopted a national law on the rights of persons with disabilities, Croatia established a VA coordination group to develop the first VA plan with broad inter-ministerial support and D.R. Congo established a committee jointly with civil society, tasked with developing a national action plan.

Since getting back home from the Cartagena Summit, VAFPs also helped raise awareness on the CAP with their local partners to foster broad adherence to and understanding of its content.