

**Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction**

**16th Meeting of States-Parties**

**Vienna, Austria**

**Remarks by Ireland on Victim Assistance**

(Ma)

Mr President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and would like to add the following in our national capacity.

We would like to thank the Committee on Victim Assistance for their conclusions and recommendations regarding the implementation by State Parties of their Victim Assistance efforts. And we welcome the previous work of Thailand in identifying best practices in the area of Victims Assistance.

For Ireland, Victim Assistance is a core element of our mine action and international development aid policies.

The Ottawa Convention was the first multilateral arms control treaty to address the humanitarian needs of victims of a particular weapon system. Through this Convention we made a promise to victims and survivors of landmines.

Survivors and victims of landmines include not only those killed or maimed by these insidious weapons but include their families and affected communities and those who continue to live in fear of unexploded landmines.

Ireland fully supports efforts outlined in the Maputo Action Plan to give more definition and specificity to Victim Assistance such as the submission of 'time-bound and measurable objectives' in Annual Transparency Reports. However, as outlined in the Committee on Victim Assistance report, we recognise the limited

success in this regard to date and would encourage State Parties to communicate their national efforts on Victim Assistance.

Ireland recognises that the effort to implement the Victim Assistance provision of the Convention must consist of nationally led processes with the full and effective participation of landmine survivors and affected communities. Ireland believes the full participation and empowerment of victims and survivors is essential in delivering effective processes. We were very pleased to have worked with Handicap International to fund a workshop on Victims Assistance in the context of the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.

Ireland also recognises the complementarity which exists between this Convention, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and other human rights instruments. We support efforts to further discuss how best to utilise these instruments for the benefit of landmine survivors and their communities.

Finally, Ireland wishes to recognise and sincerely thank all victims and organisations such as ICBL and ICRC for their unwavering commitment despite challenges, to the Convention and their continuous struggle to ensure its full implementation.

Thank You

**[ENDS]**