

VA SPEECH

Dear Chair, Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the Government of Tajikistan, I would like to thank our donors and partners: US Department of State, OSCE, NPA, UN agencies, ICRC and WHO for their contribution to Victim Assistance and disability related activities in Tajikistan and present our gratitude to the Implementation Support Unit and the Committee on Victim Assistance!

Let me inform you on our latest achievements which have been made in order to ensure the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are taken into account:

- Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) is maintaining a centralized database IMSMA Core and is sharing information with relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive response to address the diverse needs of mine victims. Since 1992 the total number of casualties resulting from accidents with

mines/ERW is 889: 538 survivors and 351 fatalities. This year, two accidents were registered: 20-years old student was killed due to explosion of landmine when he was collecting mushrooms in the mountains area close to his village. Another accident happened when deminer received a slight injury and burn to his right hand as a result of booby-trap explosion, in a minefield in the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. He was immediately provided by the emergency medical response, received necessary medical services in the traumatology department of the National Medical Hospital in Dushanbe as well as psychological support. All new data is entered into IMSMA Core database.

- Landmine survivors and their representative organizations, namely public organization “Taqdir” and “Society of Landmine Survivors” always take active part in all matters that affect them. In 2023, four TWG meetings conducted in the regional centers gathered 114 participants (72 men, 42 women) including 27 survivors. We are planning to

organize the last meeting of VA Technical Working Group in Dushanbe in December 2023.

- During 10 months of 2023 – 42 survivors were provided by free services in 4 Physical Rehabilitation centers: Dushanbe, Khujand, Kulyab and newly reopened with Japan Government and ICRC support Khorog Center. In the result, 14 survivors obtained 16 prostheses and 3 survivors obtained 4 crutches; 25 survivors were provided by free repair of their assistive devices.

To build up Physical Rehabilitation skills in the country, two Tajik citizens started an ICRC-sponsored 18-months single discipline scholarship in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (1 Prosthetist and 1 Orthotist). Upon completion of the studies, both will return to Tajikistan and be seconded to the new SEOP Khorog.

Three ICRC Physical Rehabilitation Project experts provided training and hands-on support to SEOP staff. The expert support mainly focused on patient-

assessment and production, casting, fitting, repair, and adjustment of different types of prostheses and orthoses for Persons with Disabilities including mine victims. Moreover, the ICRC experts also mentored and provided formal training of SEOP staff from Dushanbe, Kulob and Khorog and reviewed the overall progress of Physical Rehabilitation Project in Tajikistan and advised on changes.

- During 2 weeks of August 40 survivors (31 men and 9 women) from remote mine-affected districts received rest, rehabilitation, improved general health and enhanced their communication and social-integration skills at the summer rehabilitation camp for victims of landmines and explosive remnants of war in the sanatorium “Bahoriston” in Sugd region. Summer rehabilitation workshop became possible due to close cooperation and financial support from OSCE Programme Office. The summer rehabilitation workshop provided psychological rehabilitation for participants through individual/group psychology and art therapy

sessions conducted by the professional psychologists and art-therapist. In addition to the traditional rehabilitation (massage, paraffin therapy, electrophoresis etc.) programme included sessions on Victim Assistance, Rights of Persons with Disabilities, progress in achieving Oslo Action Plan, national legislative basis relevant to persons with disabilities.

- This year, we were honoured to welcome AP Mine Ban Convention's ISU Officer Mr. Firoz Ali Alizade in the summer rehabilitation workshop. His Programme of visit included meetings with survivors, representatives of the Ministry of health and social protection of population, National Union of Persons with Disabilities, members of landmine survivors NGO "Taqdir" and former Tajikistan Campaign to Ban Landmine (TCBL).

- In 2024 we are planning to continue our activities to achieve VA objectives contained in the OAP, namely: strengthen technical capacity of the National Orthopedic Centre with USDOS support, provide

psycho-social support to survivors and conducting technical working group meetings to coordinate VA activities in the country.

But despite of all our efforts, Tajikistan still is in need of financial and technical support in order to fulfill VA obligations contained in the Oslo Action Plan. The main priorities remain economic condition and psychological well-being of landmine survivors, increasing capacity of organizations of landmine survivors and CRPD ratification by our country. Using this opportunity, we again express our gratitude to our donors and appeal for their continuous support to Tajikistan VA Programme. Thank you very much for your attention!