

**ICBL Summary of the 12th Meeting of States Party to the Mine Ban Treaty  
Geneva, Switzerland, 3-7 December 2012**

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE**

**4 December**

**Algeria** and **Croatia**, as Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance (VA), emphasized the lack of support to provide adequate assistance to victims. They also said political will and financial assistance are both essential to meet the goals of the MBT regarding VA.

**Afghanistan** announced it was currently reviewing the Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan, with about half the previous plan having been implemented. It is also reexamining the National Law for the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities to make it conform with the CRPD, ratified in September 2012. **Albania** said it was looking to fill gaps in shortages of prosthetic materials and also declared that its parliament ratified the CRPD on 15 November 2012. **Algeria** explained that under an agreement signed on 3 December 2012, the costs of assistive devices for persons with disabilities would now be covered by the government. **Angola** updated progress on its victim needs assessment, started in October 2010.

**Burundi** reported on its technical cooperation with Thailand in setting up a prosthetics workshop. **Cambodia** extended its expired national disability plan in order to prepare a new strategy including VA. **Chad** outlined its VA objectives to 2017 but said it lacked funding and called for international support.

**Chile** reiterated the importance of collecting data and assessing the needs of the victims. **Colombia** emphasized the need to design specific programs for children and young survivors, and said that it is working to develop national standards and guidelines for comprehensive assistance to child victims. It also noted that it is increasingly difficult to identify financial resources to meet MBT and CAP obligations and called on states to continue providing support. **Croatia** screened a video about the building of a center for mine victims and other victims of trauma, stressing the need for this kind of infrastructure in order to improve the lives of survivors. **DR Congo** said numerous challenges remain, such as improving data collection and analysis systems, and enhancing the coverage and sustainability of services.

**Ethiopia** said that it was working to improve implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan victim assistance actions through recently adopted disability and rehabilitation strategies. **Guinea-Bissau** said little progress has been made in improving access to services and providing quality assistance to survivors: facilities and emergency transportation are almost non-existent, and these very limited services are further hampered by a lack of communication infrastructure.

**Iraq** explained the government had set up centers for rehabilitation and for the distribution of prostheses, and listed challenges such as the high number of victims, the low quality of prostheses, and the lack of available experts. **Jordan** announced that its priority has now shifted from clearance to VA, and that it is working to meet the most pressing needs of the victims, namely rehabilitation services and health care.

**Mozambique** announced that this year it approved a second national action plan to ensure the promotion of rights of persons with disabilities; this plan includes actions to benefit mine/ERW survivors. **Peru** mentioned the implementation of socio-economic inclusion projects for landmine victims and improvements to physical rehabilitation in a region where survivors are located. !

**Senegal** acknowledged the importance of assessing the level of satisfaction of the victims and introducing corrective measures accordingly; it also presented obstacles in implementing VA such as poor resource management, the lack of coordination between the actors, and the lack of staff and materials. **Serbia** said that it had begun to work on a victim assistance plan and that it needed international support to improve the quality of survivors' lives. **South Sudan** said it was supporting a disability survey in 3 localities and coordinating with relevant actors in the development of VA programs; further information was included in its recently submitted Article 7 report. **Sudan** said its victim assistance program has registered progress in all areas of VA from data management to the inclusion of survivors and their families into society.

**Tajikistan** noted that it was prioritizing disability and VA activities in accordance with a recent situation analysis of the sector, improvement in the training of medical personnel as well as a new accessibility project. **Thailand** reported that it revised its VA master plan and emphasized the need for practical and sustainable VA incorporated into other frameworks while offering to share expertise with other countries. **Uganda** identified 1,125 landmine and ERW survivors since the launch of its revised comprehensive assistance plan in 2010; but it noted that despite some progress there still remains a challenge of inadequate funding to cover all affected districts. **Zambia** stated that efforts to assist victims were limited by a lack of knowledge of the needs of victims.

**Australia** is funding a study by the ISU to highlight good examples of how mine action centers can contribute to victim assistance and promote such work elsewhere. **Mexico** reiterated that all States Parties should cooperate and share best practices when it comes to assisting victims. **Norway** posited that the majority of survivors are better off today than they were 15 years ago and recommended increasing the use of synergies between conventions and bringing discussions on victim assistance to other fora, including the WHO, ILO and CRPD.

The **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** recalled that special attention should be given to ensure VA efforts are integrated into broader frameworks on disability issues; it added the UN would review its policy on VA next spring. The **ICRC** noted it has witnessed problems with service delivery, lack of accessibility, and lack of funding where it implemented VA projects. It also noted the need to foster synergies between the MBT, CCW Protocol V, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** said the implementation of the CRPD is essential and should be part of the actions taken by states to fulfill their VA obligations as its principles would improve the lives of people with disabilities, including landmine victims.

Taking the floor on behalf of the **ICBL**, Margaret Arech Orech presented three critical areas to improve the lives of survivors: the inclusion and participation of victims in VA programs, the availability and accessibility of quality services, and the need to increase economic opportunities for landmine survivors.

**Mentions of ICBL or civil society**

**DR Congo** thanked the ICBL for its support to a psychological reintegration project in 2012 that benefited 158 survivors. Senegal also thanked ICBL for support through the Survivors Network project. **Ethiopia** congratulated the ICBL for its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday and for the inspiring work realized so far. **Mexico** and **Mozambique** noted the essential participation of civil society in the implementation of VA programs.