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Process Support provided by the Implementation Support Unit of the GICHD to States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention that have reported the responsibility for significant numbers of landmine survivors¹

8 February 2006

Context:

At the First Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, it was noted that while not forgetting the responsibilities to landmine victims wherever they may be, a greater emphasis must be placed on improving the quality of life of landmine survivors in the 24 State Parties which have indicated that they hold the responsibility for significant numbers of survivors. Subsequently, the 2004-2005 Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration sought to maximize the *Nairobi Action Plan* as a basis for action by encouraging and supporting these 24 States Parties in understanding what can or should be achieved by December 2009 by / in these 24 States.

It was accepted that what can or should be achieved by when and how will be different for each of these 24 States Parties. Therefore, given that the ultimate responsibility of meeting the needs of survivors rests with each of these States, it was understood that they themselves needed to define what can or should be achieved (in concrete and measurable terms) and how. Consequently, the Co-Chairs distributed a comprehensive questionnaire to the 24 relevant States Parties to support their articulation of (a) specific, measurable and realistic victim assistance objectives by 2009; (b) plans to achieve these objectives; and (c) means to implement these plans. This questionnaire was inspired by the *Strategic Framework for Planning Integrated Victim Assistance Programmes*, which was developed by Switzerland in 1999, and it was based upon the *Guidelines for the Socio-economic Reintegration of Landmine Survivors*, which was produced by the World Rehabilitation Fund and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2003.

To further support the efforts of these 24 States Parties in developing concrete and measurable objectives for victim assistance, the Co-Chairs convened two regional workshops in which all 4 pertinent Latin American States Parties participated and in which 10 of the 11 pertinent African States Parties participated. The Co-Chairs also pursued a number of country-specific assistance strategies and provided a forum for States Parties to present their initial responses to the questionnaire at the June 2005 meeting of the Standing Committee. In addition, a number of States Parties were assisted by the Implementation Support Unit of the GICHD (in part via consultants that were engaged with financial support provided by the then Norwegian Co-Chair) in preparing responses to the questionnaire.

It was noted that the questionnaire is not an end-product but rather an initial step in a long-term planning and implementation process as it concerns victim assistance. Responses to these questionnaires were summarized in a lengthy annex to the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties' *Zagreb Progress Report* and hence have become part of the Convention's permanent record. In sum, there is now a much more solid basis for developing a clearer road map regarding what needs to be done between 2005 and the Second Review Conference and how success pertaining to victim assistance will be measured in 2009.

However, certain challenges persist:

¹ In keeping with the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit, *process support* is being provided to advance the objectives and priorities of the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration. The provision of such support has been made possible by project funding provided by the Swiss Co-Chair of the Standing Committee.

- The quality of the responses has been mixed: (a) Few States Parties actually responded with “SMART” objectives; (b) Some States Parties detailed at length their status. However, even though this should have provided a sound basis for setting objectives, very little was put forward in terms of what the desired status would be in 2009; (c) Some States Parties have failed to spell out what is known or not known about the status.
- Whereas the First Review Conference noted that “assistance to landmine victims should be viewed as a part of a country’s overall public health and social services systems and human rights frameworks,” in many instances the effort to develop victim assistance objectives has been led by demining officials with little interaction with those responsible for health and social services. Moreover, in some instances the actual provision of assistance to landmine survivors appears to be the responsibility of mine action structures, not health care or social service structures.
- Whereas the first Review Conference recorded that “providing adequate assistance to landmine survivors must be seen in a broader context of development and underdevelopment,” many States Parties have prepared Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers or national development plans to overcome broader development challenges, with most such documents containing objectives that are relevant to advancing the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of landmine survivors. However, in many instances the preparation of victim assistance objectives has not taken these broader national plans into consideration.

The need to overcome these challenges and to monitor progress were identified in the *Zagreb Progress Report* as priorities in the period leading to the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties:

- **“While objectives may have been established by many of the 24 States Parties that have reported the responsibility for significant numbers of survivors, it is essential that these States Parties proceed with the more complex task of developing comprehensive national plans to guide the fulfilment of these objectives, ensuring that these plans integrate mine victim assistance into broader health care and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks.”**
- **“In keeping with the commitment made in the *Nairobi Action Plan* to monitor and promote progress in the achievement of victim assistance goals, a priority must be, to place a focus on what steps are being taken to achieve the national objectives set by the 24 most affected States Parties and what progress is being made.”**

Process support:

The best way to assure progress in overcoming these challenges is to work intensively, on a national basis, with as many of the relevant States Parties as possible (i.e., probably up to 10) while providing some level of support to all 24 of these States Parties. The aim is to see that by the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties: (a) those with good objectives would develop good plans; (b) those with vague objectives would develop more concrete objectives; and, (c) those that had not engaged, or had engaged very little, in the process of developing objectives and plans in 2005 would get engaged.

Some level of support will be provided to all 24 relevant States Parties in the form of advice each may wish to consider in improving on 2005 efforts to establish SMART objectives. In addition, the ISU will provide *process support* to up to 10 relevant States Parties in advancing their inter-ministerial efforts to establish better objectives and develop good plans. *Process support* involves country visits during which the following will take place:

- (a) one-on-one meetings with officials from relevant ministries to raise awareness of the matter and to stimulate inter-ministerial coordination;

(b) outreach to relevant international and other organizations – particularly the WHO, ILO, UNDP and ICRC, as well as relevant member organizations of the ICBL – to ensure that their efforts in support of the State Party in question are not being duplicated but rather are both incorporated into and incorporate mine victim assistance efforts;

(c) inter-ministerial workshops – as the culmination of in-country efforts – to bring together all relevant actors to discuss and consolidate improvements on objectives and the development of plans.

It should be noted that workshops are not considered as stand-alone activities or ends in themselves. Rather, workshops would be viewed as part of a State Party's overall process of objective setting and planning and hence an integrated aspect of *process support*.

The priority for the provision of *process support* will be those States Parties from which the Co-Chairs wish to extract lessons in 2006 by comparative case studies in inter-ministerial coordination (i.e., Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mozambique). Other States Parties receiving *process support* will be identified based upon the following criteria: (a) The State Party wants an intervention, it will make the necessary arrangements, it understands the nature of this exercise and it would truly benefit from support; (b) The Unit's support would contribute to a significant level of success – for example, because there is an expectation that a State Party should be able to deliver and / or because a State Party is one of the 24 that has the greatest numbers of survivors; (c) The Unit's support to a State Party would not duplicate good work being done by others to achieve the aims of the initiative; and, (d) There is a transportation or other efficiency of which we could take advantage.