STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

CCM Intersessional Meeting, Geneva, April 16 – 19 2012

Distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

On behalf of the delegation of Croatia I would like to express our pleasure to participate in the work of the CCM Intersessional Meeting and I would also like to thank Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina for their work to date as Friends of the Chair on victim assistance.

In our effort to ensure that adequate measures for the timely provision of assistance to mine and UXO victims are being taken, we can inform about the following:

A) Report on progress as well as the challenges/difficulties experienced with implementation of the VAP

- The National Coordinating Body for Helping Mine and UXO Victims was established in 2010 with members being representatives of GO and NGO sector (19 members of which 5 are NGOs). Its founding was based on recommendations from CAP and VAP, as well as on obligations from the CRPD. CROMAC is responsible for management of the Coordinating Body. Its main task is to make victim assistance system in Croatia a sustainable one.

- The National Action Plan for Helping Mine and UXO Victims 2010-2014 is based on the MBT and the CCM, as well as on the CAP and VAP. Its main goal is to improve the quality of life of people injured by mines and UXO, families of the survivors and people being killed. Coordination and systematic monitoring of goals is set in 6 chapters: understanding the problem we are facing; emergency medical procedures and further medical care; physical rehabilitation; psychosocial support; economic integration; laws and public policies. For each of these chapters the current
situation is presented, along with goals and plans for achieving them, as well as sources of funding.

- **Unified National Database of Mine and UXO Victims** is currently being prepared by the Croatian National Institute of Public Health. Database will be run by CROMAC and will contain the following categories of data: personal data; mine incident data; information on the status and degree of disability; information on the realized rights; information about education, occupation and employment and information about family members of landmine survivors. We expect that the base as such should provide easier monitoring over the process of rehabilitation and reintegration of mine victims into the society.

- **Challenges/Difficulties.** Coordinating Body does not have mandate for developing, monitoring or evaluating nor does it have resources for its work. There is a need to clearly and precisely define its structure, scope and powers which would effectively ensure that all victims enjoy equal and effective system of assistance and care. Problems also arise in programs of psychological and social rehabilitation of the victims and their employment (Centers for Psychosocial Assistance in 20 counties are often under-staffed and under-financed or without enforceable programs for adequate and timely service to beneficiaries). They should be more proactive in their work because often the victim/survivor is the one who comes first to them asking for help. Lack of monitoring and disregard of quotas for the employment of PwDs is still evident.

**B) Concrete examples of collaboration between governments and NGOs in providing assistance to the victims on the ground**

- The Association for Promotion of Equal Opportunities in cooperation with the Center for Peace Studies and the Mine Victim Association in Karlovac County has conducted the project entitled “**Mine victims: where are they, what they do and what they need**”. The results of their study that included 400 mine and UXO victims were used as guidelines for the follow-up activities of the Coordinating Body and as direction in which activities of the Coordinating Body have to be pointed in order to reach the level of care for the victims that may be considered effective and optimal. The book with results of this study was published in December 2011.
C) Integrate the implementation of the victim assistance provisions of the CCM in existing coordination mechanisms

- The National Action Plan for Helping Mine and UXO Victims 2010-2014 is integrated into the institutional forms of care for PwDs based on existing laws. Plan also foresees changes to some parts of legislative in order to ensure higher compliance with conventions.