



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS & OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA**

By

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Uganda's Statement/Presentation at the Accra meeting on Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on Implementation of Article Five –Victim Assistance

The Chairperson

Distinguished Delegates

Representatives of the UN

The Cluster Munitions Coalition,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Ghana for hosting this important seminar and the warm hospitality we are enjoying in this beautiful city of Accra. My delegation also warmly appreciates Norway and the UNDP for supporting this meeting.

Let me take this opportunity to provide an update on Uganda's progress in the implementation of the victim assistance component of the Convention on Cluster Munitions which Uganda signed in 2008 and is in the process to ratify.

Chairperson and distinguished delegates, Uganda developed a Comprehensive Plan for land mine / ERWs survivors in 2008 and this was reviewed in 2010 to re-align it with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Development Plan as well as the Cartagena Action Plan. This Plan brings on board all issues and concerns for all disabled persons.

The comprehensive plan covers a number of thematic areas such as; data collection on land mines and ERW survivors, management of emergency response for the survivors, health care support, physical and functional rehabilitation, targeted education for PWDs, psychological and psychosocial support, economic empowerment, awareness raising, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, has made efforts to implement some of these activities. However, more remains to be done if additional resources are mobilized.

Distinguished delegates, Uganda established a Management Information System to capture data on land mines and cluster munitions victims and survivors in coordination with the Mine Action Center based at the Office of the Prime Minister. This is with support from the Danish Demining Group (DDG). Through this system, we have been able to track some data on mine/ERW victims and survivors, some of whom are now being assisted through Handicap International.

Additionally, in order to collect more data throughout the country on all land mine/cluster munitions victims, we have succeeded in integrating vital questions on this issue within the questionnaire for the Uganda Population and Housing Census that will be conducted next year.

Chairperson, I should also report that, Uganda has registered tremendous progress in the area of national laws and policies on PWDs generally. There exists the National Policy on Disability 2006, the National Council for Disability Act 2003 and the Persons with Disabilities Act 2006. These are all being reviewed to align them with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Under the Health Care and Emergency Response, the interventions are included in the Health Sector Strategic Plan III (HSSP) for the period July 2010 to June 2015. However the HSSP is not fully funded and this is impacting on the level of services available to persons with disabilities.

Another significant challenge is that of limited access to physical rehabilitation services. Most of the victims live in remote rural areas, while referral health facilities are located at regional levels far away from easy reach of the victims; the solution to this problem is to provide conducive transport and maintenance of the victims to be able to access the health facilities for assistance.

Ladies and gentlemen, progress has also been registered in the area of strengthening peer support networks particularly through the work of Community Development Officers and Rehabilitation Officers whom government has recruited to coordinate and implement community based rehabilitation and development programmes at the district and down to sub county levels.

As regards economic empowerment, Government, with the support from UNDP supplied OX ploughs and Oxen to survivors to improve on crop husbandry. Vocational training through apprenticeship was provided. The most significant achievement is the implementation of the special grants for persons with disabilities programme which government launched in 2010. This is a country-wide programme which covers cluster munitions survivors among PWDs. Each district receives an average of 15,000 USD annually to support PWDs to implement income generation projects (IGA).

Chairperson, Uganda established an Inter Agency- Sectoral Committee that brings together all stake holders involved in providing services for persons with PWDs. This coordination structure helps in avoiding duplication of effort and promotes maximization of resources and harmonization of implementation strategies.

As I conclude, I need to reiterate Uganda's commitment to addressing the plight of persons with disability including survivors of land mines, ERWs. However, as highlighted above, full implementation of planned activities within the Comprehensive Plan is hampered by inadequate resources. I therefore, want to use this opportunity to appeal to prospective donors to come to our assistance in order to fully implement the Plan.

I thank you for your kind attention.