

Official Statement

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by

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Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First I would like to express my pleasure to participate in the Second meeting of States parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

As regarding your questions the following is provided;

- Victim Assistance capacities and plan based on the Cartagena and Vientiane Action Plans are developed in Albania and involved line ministries, local authorities, donors and other partners in victim assistance and in a broader disability issues in Albania. The development of the national plan was a good opportunity to analyze the situation regarding the existing capacities to assist the victims and to identify the needs and areas for interventions and improvements. Cluster munitions survivors and persons with disabilities and their representative organizations contributed by their active participation to the national planning for victim assistance.
- Ministry of Health in close cooperation with donors and other partners continue to work in improving the emergency, ongoing health care and the rehabilitation capacities. Those services are available equally to men, women, boys and girls both at local and remote areas and at the national level.

- Specifically with the request of the mine and cluster munitions survivors through the Albanian Mine Action Programme, rehabilitation capacities have been fully developed at previously affected region. The survivors and other persons with disabilities are benefiting from those services. Technical assistance through the PMR project to the improvements of those capacities at local and national level continues.
- In the area of the socio-economic inclusion, specific projects have been implemented in support to socio-economic inclusion of the injured people. A new project aiming at providing vocational training and some financial support is being implemented for the survivors of mines and Cluster munitions or their family member. This project will assist at least 20 survivors or their family members with professionals' skills. Just to mention here that from the previous projects of this kind more than 95 survivors or their family members have been assisted and the majority of them are already working in the professions they were trained.
- While progress is noted in the developments of the health and rehabilitation capacities and in the economic and social inclusion of the survivors and at some parts of the affected communities, there are gaps and shortages already identified in the health & rehabilitation sector and economic and social inclusion. Albania will count in the international support and is working with donors and partners to secure the assistance in order to continue to provide the services and capacities needed as well as further improve the quality of those services.
- The focal points at relevant ministries and to other relevant authorities are designated and they have the right expertise to coordinate the development, implementation and monitoring of the victim assistance policies and plans.
- Just to mention at the beginning that the last accident with cluster munitions was registered in Albania in June 2005. Data and detailed statistics on the casualties from cluster munitions are available and are disaggregated by age and sex and are shared with all relevant actors.

- An inter-ministerial coordination mechanism is in place and actively led by the Chairman of AMAC. Representatives of several related ministries are members at this committee. While Albania is a signatory country to the CRPD, positive developments are expected to strengthen the coordination mechanism.
- My country Albania, under technical assistance from UNDP is reviewing the disability-related legal and policy frameworks with the aim to assess their compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Several activities; consultations, round tables, training of the civil society and government officials are organized in Albania under this project. Disabled people and their representative organizations are persistently participating in those activities and voicing their needs.

Regarding the question to the synergies;

- There are synergies at awareness raising activities, workshops, roundtables when ever organized, there is participation of the survivors from mines, cluster munitions, Abandoned unexploded Ordnances (AXO) and other persons with disabilities and or their representative organizations.
- DPOs in Albania are trying to work together - to be in one voice in advocating for their rights and needs.
- More could benefit by sharing information and good practice in addressing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. This could be at national and international level.

The Vientiane Action Plan will guide us in our future work and will do utmost to improve the services and meet the needs of the victims and survivors and other people with disabilities.

Thank you for your attention.