

Convention on Cluster Munitions
Third Meeting of States Parties
Oslo
Victim Assistance
Norwegian statement
12 September 2012

Thank you, Mr. President,

First, I would like to thank ICRC for their presentation and the CMC for their illustrations. Please also let me extend my appreciation to the coordinators Austria and Bosnia for their comments and their work on victim assistance.

The victim assistance obligations in the Convention on Cluster Munitions' Article 5, have been an important contribution to the global efforts to promote the rights of individuals with physical disabilities. We all agree that the aim of our efforts is to ensure that victims can enjoy their full rights, including access to all relevant services and inclusion in society. The various weapon specific victim assistance schemes are tools towards these aims, with basically the same provisions and intentions. As of today there is no practical difference between them when it comes to how victim's rights and needs are perceived.

Driven by the progress made with the implementation of the Mine Ban Convention and the Cluster Munitions Convention, there is now a wide acceptance of the principles of non-discrimination, integration, and a holistic and rights-based approach, on which the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is an overarching framework. Norway warmly welcomes this development. Victim assistance should not be confined or understood as a disarmament issue, and needs to be recognized as part of a much broader health, development and social agenda. These three Conventions constitute a mutually reinforcing framework in the implementation of victim assistance, and assistance to disabled persons under these different instruments should be promoted at the national level. This contributes to strengthening rights beyond what could be achieved under each specific instrument.

The situation of disabled people is of great concern. Noting with satisfaction that the CRPD is increasingly recognized as the primary instrument for ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities, we must start to ask how the efforts we do in the context of the MBC and CCM are related to, and linked with, the CRPD work. For example, we need to explore what specific aspects of victim assistance efforts that will be crucial to pursue within the MBC and the CCM context, as the CRPD will not provide sufficient space for those efforts. We look forward to participating in this discussion in the years to come.

Recognizing and addressing the rights and needs of victims of cluster munitions by using existing structures and approaches is important. To be of real support the assistance must be tailored to meet the victim's needs – in an age- and gender sensitive way. Equal opportunities and accessibility are key factors in order to secure the rights of survivors and other persons with disabilities. My delegation would again like to underscore that the Convention on Cluster Munitions by itself is not sufficient to deliver on this. Assistance must be provided by the relevant national and local authorities; involving all institutions and stakeholders in the process – and particularly victims of cluster munitions and persons with disabilities themselves.

We have seen the reports that several States Parties cut back victim assistance services. It is, however, fundamental that States Parties make victim assistance a priority and have appropriate capacities to address the rights and needs of victims. People must remain the focus of our efforts. The newly published Cluster Munition Monitor 2012 gives us a strong reminder that there is a need to allocate necessary resources. The Monitor reveals **that only** 5% of all financial support from donors in 2012 has been earmarked for victim assistance out of the total budget dedicated to combating these weapons. We have to recognize the link between the lack of funding and limited progress. Norway provides earmarked support to assisting victims of cluster munitions and landmines. Perhaps most importantly we also provide more support to countries' social and economic development programmes and to their health and social budgets. This way we hope to contribute to a comprehensive and efficient approach to the national responses. States in a position to assist should ensure that the resources they provide build suitable and sustainable capacities in affected States. This is indeed a collective effort. We want to assure you that Norway remains fully committed to its obligations under Article 6 of the CCM, and is engaged through cooperative partnerships with affected states, civil society and international organizations.

Thank you.