



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Presented

By

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Speech I

Update on Victim Assistance

CCM State Party Meeting

Oslo, September 2012

Speech I – Update on Victim Assistance

Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to present the progress and challenges of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in relation to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in the context of broader national disability programs.

The related government bodies such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled along with the Ministries of Public Health and Education and other national and international disability stakeholders have continued to provide support to the survivors and other persons with disabilities in the country practicing an inclusive approach.

As a result of joint efforts of government and civil society fortunately the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has become state party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in September 2011. The convention on cluster munitions along with the convention on the rights of persons with disability (CRPD) has been published in the official gazette number 1,052 of the Ministry of Justice. The CRPD has been published in the gazette after being passed by both lower and upper houses of the parliament in 2011 and the same culminated into a presidential decree. Efforts for its ratification are ongoing.

The government is revising the Afghanistan National Disability Action Plan which ended in 2011. The revision will consider Afghanistan's international and national disability assistance related rights and obligations including victim assistance in a comprehensive and inclusive manner. The revision is ongoing under the leadership of MoLSAMD and with the support from other government bodies and disability stakeholders.

Work on drafting National legislation in respect of article 9 of the convention on cluster munitions and anti- mine ban treaty has been started.

To better support the inclusion of children with disabilities including victims of cluster munitions, the Ministry of Education has trained 454 school teachers in Kabul and 18 teachers in Badakhshan province. Training of Trainers on inclusive education has been conducted in Takhar province and 518 children with disabilities and their parents have received awareness on inclusive education which seeks to fulfill the rights of all learners to a quality education.

In 2011, the Ministry of Public Health has trained 500 health staff on disability awareness and physical rehabilitation in six provinces such as: Saripol, Samangan, Bamyan, Kapisa, Balkh and Paktia to support early detection and identification of those with disability, and to improve access to healthcare services for persons with disabilities.

The Ministry of Public Health has also approved a Disability and Physical Rehabilitation Strategy to further professionalize and prioritize disability and rehabilitation programs within the ministry. This strategy, the first of its kind, will seek to improve social inclusion of persons with disability, enhance provision of early treatment to children with severe disabilities and increase preventive measures that target avoidable causes of disability, among other goals.

While there is tangible progress on the ground such as the ratification of CCM and publication of CCM and CRPD in the gazette, revision of ANDAP as well as ongoing coordination and advocacy efforts, there are significant challenges to overcome. Our caseload is large due to the significant number of survivors and persons with disabilities and physical infrastructure being limited. We also need to strengthen our methods of monitoring and evaluating the existing services. Lastly, we need to do more to ensure that those with disabilities have equal and real rights. In the coming years, we will strive to achieve our obligations towards improving the lives of all Afghan cluster munitions, landmine and ERW survivors and other persons with disabilities. We hope that you will support us in this noble endeavour.

Thank you!