



**"Long-term support, including social inclusion and economic reintegration  
for resilience of victims and development of their communities"**

Fourth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions  
(Lusaka, 10-13 September 2013)

Agenda item 10.d.: Consideration of matters pertaining to victim assistance  
in accordance with Article 5

Statement by  
Amb. Godfrey Simasiku  
President of the Zambia Red Cross Society

On behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) thanks for the floor. We welcome Zambia Government's special attention to the importance of universalization of the Convention and reaffirm our commitment to the promotion of universalization, which is the foundation of the success of the Convention's implementation, including victim assistance.

Mr President,

After the adoption of the Convention, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in 2009 adopted a Strategy on Landmines, Cluster Munitions and other Explosive Remnants of War, and it has served as the guidance for our work during the current decade. Red Cross Red Crescent, using its auxiliary role to public authorities, are supporting governments in the implementation of relevant Conventions. According to the result from a recent survey with our National Societies, among a wide range of work, victim assistance has been a strong program component for National Societies to deliver services to the communities in cluster munitions and other explosive weapons contaminated regions. The types of activities range from data collection including identification of people with disabilities, referral; and health services such as emergency and surgical care, medical supplies, first aid training, mobile and fixed clinics; to longer term support including physical rehabilitation and psychosocial support, accompaniment for treatment including transportation and accommodation, food

and financial assistance, education, social-economic reintegration including microloans and income generation training. And the list goes long.

Mr President,

The IFRC appreciates the Lusaka Progress Report and wish to take this opportunity to respond to the questions raised in the Report concerning victim assistance.

The IFRC believes that for bringing the vision of Vientiane to action in term of victim assistance there are three indispensable enabler factors:

First: We must move from effective aid to **cooperation for effective development**. In December 2011, “Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation” was adopted and up to today it was endorsed by not least than 160 States and 50 international organisations. To the Red Cross Red Crescent, this commitment is significant for victim assistance through international cooperation and assistance as it recognises the importance of local ownership. To this extent, the IFRC wishes to draw attention to the focus on people and the need of **capacity building to increase local institutions’ effectiveness for long-term support and service delivery to communities**.

Second: For victim assistance to be effective, programs must be designed with a holistic approach and in a way that **longer term consistent support can be provided to victims and their communities, with an aim to increase their resilience and coping mechanism**. Let me take the work of the Lao Red Cross as example:

The Lao Red Cross as auxiliary to the Lao Government in rendering humanitarian services to improve the health and livelihood of vulnerable people through community based disaster risk reduction activities and is working with the Ministry of Health to implement the Health Equity Fund. This fund was created to provide health services to poor people. The Lao Red Cross is doing this with the Swiss Red Cross, Asian Development Bank and World Bank, delivering health and care services across the country in the spirit of public-private partnership to ensure longer-term transformation. The Lao Red Cross also undertakes work training villagers and health workers on HIV prevention and care, community based health focusing on nutrition training and mother and child health, targeting vulnerable individuals particularly women and working to ensure people live longer and healthier lives. Such an extended service delivery is meaningful and of particular importance in Xieng Khouang province, which is the second most affected area by cluster munitions in country.

Same goes to my national society, Zambia Red Cross Society. With the support from the Netherlands Red Cross, the National Society assists the most vulnerable groups without discrimination and in an integrated way. As children are among the most vulnerable groups to cluster munitions, the support to children, including orphans and vulnerable children (OV), is one of the priorities of the National Societies. Supports range from education, medical and psychosocial support, to food assistance, just to mention a few.

Third: Programs for victim assistance must be designed with other relevant treaties as references, for instance **the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**, and be included in relevant national development plans to ensure their sustainability and to enable a true disability-inclusive society.

Disability inclusion should be part of all development strategies and action plans. The IFRC recommends that specific disability policies are adopted at institutional level where relevant. Combining with a disability strategy, which sets out a consolidated and comprehensive long-term vision for improving the well-being of persons with disabilities and cover both mainstream policy and program areas and specific services for persons with disabilities, the policies will certainly support States in their victim assistance without discrimination on the basis of what caused the injury/disability.

In this regard, we are pleased to inform you that in November in Sydney during the Movement's Statutory Meetings, 189 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, ICRC and IFRC will gather and commit for better supports at all levels for improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities. We look forward to close collaborations with governments to achieve the vision as committed in relevant Conventions, including CRPD.

Mr President,

Weapons such as cluster munitions increase vulnerabilities of people and their communities. When addressing their vulnerabilities, we must remember that only by doing it in a holistic manner and with inclusion in national development plans, we can build coping capacity and increase people and communities' resilience for local development.

Thank you for your attention.