

Croatia

Thank you Madame Chair, Friend of the President

I would like to inform you all on the important progress made in Croatia in the implementation of the Vientiane and Cartagena Action Plans which go hand in hand, as well as remaining challenges.

1. **National Coordinating Body for Helping Mine and UXO Victims** has been formally established in early 2010 with members being representatives of GO and NGO sector (19 members of which 5 are NGOs). Its founding was based on recommendations from CAP and VAP, as well as on obligations from the CRPD. Its main tasks include creation of national action plan for helping mine and UXO victims; creation of unified national database of mine and UXO victims; ensuring that adequate measures for the timely provision of assistance to mine and UXO victims are being taken. According to the Law on Humanitarian Demining, CROMAC is responsible for management of the Coordinating Body. Besides these 19 institutions a number of other institutions and organizations (including NGOs) are (in) directly involved in the process of assistance to mine victims in Croatia.

2. As for the **Unified National Database of Mine and UXO Victims**, currently in Croatia, a number of GOs and some NGOs have databases about mine and UXO victims but the data in these bases are different and often incomplete, so in 2010 a process of forming a unified database about mine/UXO victims began. So far all institutions and organizations that have information about mine/UXO victims have submitted these data to Croatian National Institute of Public Health, which is preparing a unified database; also the

Agreement on Cooperation in the Development of a Unified Database and Data Exchange has just been signed. However, this Agreement foresees that data will be exchanged only between GOs, with NGOs excluded from it which is due to legal regulations for the protection of personal data and the right to access data. Some NGOs now fear they will only have access to statistics and not to the actual/concrete data. Therefore, Croatia would like to hear how other countries have solved this issue. New database will contain the following categories of data: personal data; mine incident data; information on the status and degree of disability; information on the realized rights; information about education, occupation and employment and information about victims' family members. We expect that the base as such

should provide easier monitoring of the process of rehabilitation and reintegration of mine victims into society.

3. National Action Plan for Helping Mine and UXO Victims 2010 – 2014 is based on the APLC and the CCM, as well as on the guidelines of CAP and VAP. Its main goal is to improve the quality of life of people injured by mines and UXO, and families of the victims and killed. Overall coordination and systematic monitoring of goals is set in 6 chapters: understanding the problem we are facing; emergency medical procedures and further medical care; physical rehabilitation; psychosocial support; economic integration; laws and public policies. For each of these chapters the current situation in 2010 is presented, along with goals and plans for achieving them, as well as sources of funding. Plan is integrated into the institutional forms of care for PwDs based on existing laws. Plan also foresees changes to some parts of legislative in order to ensure higher compliance with conventions. NAP is currently being submitted to Croatian GO for consideration.

4. National Implementation Legislation – Law on Cluster Munitions, is currently being drafted by the Working group with representatives from MFAEI, MoD, MoI, CROMAC and MineAid NGO. Law would include the imposition of penal sanctions to prevent and suppress any activity prohibited by the CCM. Law would also establish a National Authority for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the CCM in Croatia.

5. Challenges we encountered during the process: Coordinating Body (still) does not have mandate for developing, monitoring or evaluating nor does it have resources for its work. There is a need to clearly and precisely define the structure, scope and powers of the Coordinating Body which would effectively ensure that all victims enjoy equal and effective system of assistance and care. To some extent the Ombudsman for PwDs performs some of Coordinating Body's functions through her role of advocacy and consultation with GO. Problems also arise in programs of psychological and social rehabilitation of the victims and their employment - Eg. Centers for Psychosocial Assistance in 20 counties are often understaffed and under-financed or without enforceable programs for adequate/timely service to (potential) beneficiaries (they should be more proactive in their work because often the

victim/survivor is the one who comes first to them asking for help); Eg. Lack of monitoring and disregard of quotas for the employment of PwDs.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.