

THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES

Statement of Slovenia on victim assistance

(Maputo, 23 June 2014)

Mr President, Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

I would like to share some of our ideas regarding the Victim Assistance. Before I do that, allow me to align to the statement of the European Union.

Mr. President,

Slovenia has always attached great importance to victim assistance. For us, victim assistance always represented true embodiment of the spirit of the Convention. In the course of last sixteen years, after the Convention entered into force, general situation for victims evolved to better and international community started to deal with mine victims in serious and organised manner, thanks to new institutional framework of our Convention. In this context, we would strongly recommend to use more effectively synergies with other international instruments, such as Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and Cluster Munitions Convention (CMC).

We note with satisfaction that continued decreasing number of new mine victims is becoming a global trend, due to the fact that new anti-personnel mines are practically not used anymore, except rare cases in few countries that Slovenia had strongly condemned. However, our mission is not finished yet; we have to continue to assist mine victims. We have to continue to ensure their social and economic reintegration and full participation in all spheres of the society on an equal basis and in a sustainable way. Due to economic and financial crisis and reduced budgets, we are not always up to the task.

We note with regret that sixteen years after we signed the Convention there are still States Parties coping with high number of mine victims as a consequence of long armed conflicts. In Slovenia we commend efforts of these states like our host Mozambique and highly value efforts of different non-governmental organisations, such as ICRC, ICBL, Halo Trust and many others. Their invaluable contribution should be highlighted and commended more often.

Slovenia would like to encourage sharing of best practices of States Parties on modalities how to assist survivors of anti-personnel mine accidents.

As you may know, Slovenia established the "ITF Enhancing Human Security" back in 1998, even before ratifying the Convention. From its beginning, the ITF organised many projects for mine victims devoted to medical rehabilitation that took place in affected countries and Slovenia, along with demining and mine-clearance projects. The ITF provided new prosthesis to hundreds of victims. Experts of Slovenian National Institute for Rehabilitation have been engaged and assisted many victims. The ITF, along with the Slovenian Red Cross Society organised summer holiday

camps for children that survived mine accidents in its facility in Debeli rtič in Slovenia. We are notably proud of the project of rehabilitation of children from Gaza Strip.

Altogether, the ITF assisted almost one thousand mine victims, mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries from the region of South Eastern Europe. We believe this could be a case of good practice and are willing to share our experience.

Finally, Mr. President, we welcome the section of Maputo Action Plan devoted to mine victim assistance and support establishment of the Committee on Victim Assistance as proposed by Austria and Costa Rica.

I thank you Mr. President.