

PON, 12.11., 15.00 - 18.00 VA

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**STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE**

**6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V to the CCW,  
Geneva, 12 – 13 November 2012**

*Thank you Hebaume Coordinator.*

Distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

On behalf of the delegation of Croatia I would like to express our pleasure at participating in the work of the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V to the CCW. Let me also add that Croatia is very pleased to see that victim assistance, rehabilitation and reintegration is gaining its due importance within the CCW.

In our effort to ensure that adequate measures for the timely provision of quality assistance to all ERW and UXO victims are being taken, Croatia has undertaken the following:

- **The National Coordinating Body for Mine and UXO Victims** was established in 2010 with members drawn from governmental and non-governmental sector (19 members of which 5 are NGOs). Its founding was based on recommendations from Cartagena Action Plan (CAP) and Vientiane Action Plan (VAP), as well as on obligations from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Its main task was drafting the National Action Plan for Mine and UXO Victims 2010-2014 and overall coordination of victim assistance system in Croatia. The Croatian Mine Action Centre (CROMAC) was responsible for overseeing the work of the Coordinating Body, but due to a number of reasons the Coordinating Body held its last meeting over a year ago.
- **The National Action Plan for Mine and UXO Victims 2010-2014** is based on the Ottawa Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), as well as on the CAP and VAP. Its goal is to improve the quality of life of people injured by mines and UXOs and of their families, as well as of families of those killed. The National

Action Plan focuses on the following six areas: 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 the areas the situation in 2010 is presented, along with goals and plans for achieving them and including the sources of funding.

- **A Unified National Database of Mine and UXO Victims** is being prepared by the Croatian National Institute of Public Health. The database will contain the following categories of data: personal data; mine/UXO incident data; information on the status and degree of disability; information on the rights realized; information pertaining to the education, occupation and employment of the survivor and, finally, information concerning family members of landmine survivors. We expect that the database will enable easier and more accurate monitoring of the process of rehabilitation and reintegration of mine victims into the society.

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- **Challenges/Difficulties**, The following weaknesses were spotted: ~~and reported:~~
  - ❖ The Coordinating Body does not have a government mandate for monitoring or evaluating the implementation of provisions from the National Action Plan nor does it have resources for its work.
  - ❖ There is a need to define the structure, scope and powers of the Coordinating Body in order to ensure that all victims enjoy an effective system of assistance and care.
  - ❖ Provision for continuing psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration remains weak.
  - ❖ The Centers for Psychosocial Assistance found in 20 counties are (often) under-staffed and under-financed. They frequently lack reach-out programs for adequate and timely service to beneficiaries so that most often the survivor is the one who must come to them asking for help.
  - ❖ Emergency teams, as well as rehabilitation specialists, are still unevenly distributed across the country.
  - ❖ People with disabilities continue to face discrimination and other challenges in employment, especially outside of the capital city.
  - ❖ Military mine/UXO/ERW survivors injured during the Homeland War receive much higher financial support than civilian survivors.

Thank you Madame <sup>2</sup> Coordinator.

