



**Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
Beirut, Lebanon**

**Thursday 15 September 2011
Summary on Victim Assistance**

Victim Assistance

Austria, as friend of the President on Victim Assistance, began the victim assistance session with an inspirational intervention by a young Lebanese survivor. Austria then requested that States Parties and others make interventions relating their progress in implementing six of the victim assistance-related actions and suggesting how victim assistance synergies might be reasonable and practical.

Question One: What has your state done at national level to adhere to Vientiane Action Plan's Actions #20 (increase capacities) and #25 (review availability, accessibility and quality of services)?

In **Lebanon**, the capacity to provide assistance to victims remained constant in the first year of the Vientiane Action Plan with no new international funding. **Lao PDR** reviewed the accessibility of victim assistance and identified gaps. In **Albania**, work was ongoing to develop capacities in rehabilitation and other services for victims but gaps and shortages remained in the health and rehabilitation sectors. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** revised its legal framework as it relates to persons with disabilities and made efforts to eliminate discrimination in access to services based on the cause of the disability. In **Tajikistan** a needs assessment is underway which will serve as the basis for proposals to increase the country's capacity to address these needs. **Afghanistan** has prioritized increasing accessibility to victim assistance services over the past year. **Vietnam** expressed the need to supplement national resources with international assistance for victim assistance. **CMC's** Aynalem Zenebe spoke about the urgency to make necessary services available and accessible and to include survivors in designing interventions. **Switzerland** will continue its support for victim assistance in 2012 and encouraged the integration of a gender perspective.

Question Two: Has your state a designated victim assistance focal point and assessed needs?

Lebanon, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and **Croatia** all confirmed existing victim assistance coordination mechanisms and/or focal points. **Lebanon** recognized the need for relevant ministries to take greater responsibility in implementing the mine action strategy. In **Croatia**, the coordinating body was established based on requirements and recommendations included in the CCM, MBT and CRPD.

All of the above countries plus **Lao PDR** described data collection efforts. Data on victims in **Albania** is disaggregated by age and sex and made available to relevant actors. In **Croatia**, progress is ongoing to establish a single consolidated database.

Question Three: Have you reviewed national laws for victim assistance?

In **Lebanon, Albania** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, reviews or reforms of national laws relevant to victim assistance were underway. **Lao PDR** had completed a review of existing laws and found them to be sufficient. In **Croatia**, the 2010-2014 National Victim Assistance Plan was based on existing laws. **Lebanon** had yet to undertake a full review of national laws.

Question 4: Where are synergies reasonable and practical?

Belgium insisted on the development of synergies at the regional and local level. **Australia** reminded participants of its publication on victim assistance to aid in promoting synergies. **Croatia, Mexico** and **Colombia** expressed their support for exchanges and the sharing of experiences across affected countries and others as a form of synergy. Speaking on behalf of the **CMC**, Megan Burke shared some concrete opportunities for synergies across the CCM, Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, from the field and diplomatic perspectives. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **ICRC** took the floor.

Sudan made a general statement regarding its integrated victim assistance program and called for international assistance to expand its geographic scope.