

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan's Statement on Victim Assistance

Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention

Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties

16-20 November 2020

Excellencies, Respected colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my honor to attend the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties;

In my country, victim assistance is more important than ever. Since 2009, the conflict in Afghanistan has claimed the lives of more than 37,000 people and has left more than 66,000 wounded. Over the past six years, civilian casualty rates in Afghanistan have soared to over 10,000 per year driven largely by increased ground engagements and explosive hazards including suicide attacks and explosive remnants of war. The large numbers of survivors are often left with life-altering injuries and disabilities, requiring access to basic healthcare as well as more specialized services including physical therapy and psychosocial support, straining an already fragile and under-resourced health system. The Afghan context presents particular challenges to fulfilling the needs of victims of conflict including ensuring women and persons living in rural communities are able to access care. Unfortunately, funding has not kept pace with the growing need and people in need are being left behind, sometimes sentenced to not being able to leave their beds and houses due to conditions that could be alleviated with access to physical therapy and other basic services.

Based on a recent survey in Afghanistan, we have 2.5M adults with severe disability which makes (13.9%) of Afghan population and 1M children with moderate and severe disabilities..

10-11% of the displaced population have a physical disability, 20% are impaired and have mental health problems, 70 to 80% of children with disabilities do not receive education 69.6% persons with disabilities are without jobs (97% of women) and only 50% have access to healthcare.

I am, however, encouraged by the renewed interest in victim assistance and Disability support in Afghanistan that is starting to take shape in the last two years;

- My ministry is leading the process of creating a 10 years national disability strategy, which is going to be officially launched on 3rd of December 2020. The strategy will prioritize the sector over the course of the next few years, helping civil society, government and donors come together around a targeted plan.

- An Inter-ministerial committee has been formed that is chaired by H.E. First Vice President with a comprehensive action plan for all its members to coordinate the responses to issues related to disability and victim assistance at very high level.
- For inclusion of Victim and Disability Assistance in other sectors, MoUs have been signed with 42 Government entities.
- A central database was established for the affairs and services related to victims and persons with disability that pilot process is going to be completed.
- Establishment of a Call Center as a rapid system for quick response to the needs and queries of persons with disability and the family of martyrs is another initiative that my ministry acquired.
- Biometric registration process of 350,000 heirs of martyrs and war victims is on-going in the center, which will be expanded, to all 34 provinces. By completion of the registration process, there will be a better understanding of the needs and requirements of war victims, it will help in better planning and priority setting of victim assistance, and disability related activities.
- Job creation Policy for person with disability has been approved and released that create a wider opportunity, through which at least 3% of government structure will be filled by persons with disability.
- A sound reformed structure for my ministry will systematically meet the requirement of VA and Disability sector at National level.
- As part of the emergency response to victim during war disaster my ministry is co-managing the conflict Mitigation Assistance for Civilian (COMAC), since 2018 more than 7,000 Incidents investigated and more than 19,000 Immediate Assistance packages was provided to more than 13,000 families and 96,000 Individuals benefited from Immediate Assistance and 5,800 victims are provided with tailored Assistance.
- Ministry of Martyrs and Disability Affairs has also developed a concept paper for making all Government premises and public infrastructures such as schools, hospitals and public service buildings accessible for persons with disability which is approved by presidential office and the implementation is started by some government entities.
- In 2020, the Ministry of Martyrs and Disability Affairs implemented the one stop shop (single window management) system for registration process of Heirs of Martyrs and person with disability.

It is an exciting time for victim assistance in Afghanistan, and I hope the international community will take the opportunity to join us and invest in services and capacity building, so that people victimized by war are given a fair chance and a healthy, productive life.

Thank you

Mr. Laludin Aryobi

State Minister for Martyrs and Disability Affairs.