

**Cartagena Summit on a Mine Free World
Victim Assistance
Statement by CANADA**

1. Mme Chair, I wish to begin by congratulating the Government and people of Colombia for the wonderful preparations for this event and the superb facility within which to hold this important summit.

You have gone to a lot of work to host us, and it shows everywhere one looks. We are also very impressed by the engagement of so many Colombians in this event, and the cause that brings us together this week.

2. We also thank Norway – you and all your colleagues Mme President – who have also worked hard to prepare, and will guide and facilitate our work throughout this Summit and the coming year. Canada will be pleased to assist in any way we can.

3. Finally our delegation offers our congratulations and warm thanks to Switzerland for a job very well done as President over the past year! Ambassador Streuli, it is always such a pleasure to work with you and your whole team. You did a remarkable job!

Mme President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. As has been noted, 26 States Parties have declared they have significant numbers of survivors and we know that their injuries are often severe and that many will require substantial and long term assistance.

5. We must also remain cognizant of the fact that providing such assistance is not just the responsibility of the affected States, but also other States Parties that are in a position to assist, as well.

6. Together, we must ensure that victim assistance receives its due share of resources that are available – human, technical and financial.

7. In the *Draft Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention*, it is stated – quite appropriately, we believe, that:

“States Parties have made significant advances in applying understandings adopted at the Nairobi Summit regarding what the aim of victim assistance is and how it should be pursued.

In addition, we have strengthened our understanding of victim assistance within the broader contexts of disability, healthcare, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration, employment, development, human rights and gender equality.”

8. Later on in the document it says, “ Further intensity of effort will be required after the Second Review Conference.”

Canada fully concurs with this assessment as it very succinctly ‘says it all’ – or almost all...

9. Further intensity is required to assist victims, but not only direct victims.

Mme President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Experience gained over the past decade has shown that many people suffer real and significant harm – though they are not themselves directly affected by a mines or other ordnance; family members and others in their community, in some cases.

11. This deeper understanding of the far reaching impact of mines and explosive remnants of war, led those who participated in the recent negotiation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, to adopt a more expansive definition of “victim” to include affected members of their families and communities, in addition to those directly affected.

12. Canada is not proposing to amend the Mine Ban Convention, but would urge all States, UN Agencies, International Organizations and civil society, nonetheless, to accept this broader definition of ‘victim’ as the ‘state of the art’ and to plan and execute our victim assistance programmes, accordingly.

Thank You,

Earl Turcotte

Cartagena
29 November 2009