

**The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World: the Second Review Conference
of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use,
Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their
Destruction**

Cartagena, 30 November 2009

Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention

Assisting the victims

Madame President,

Let me first to congratulate, on behalf of the Government of Japan, Ambassador Susan Eckey upon her appointment as President of this Conference. Please be assured that the Delegation of Japan is ready to fully cooperate and proactively participate in all the activities over this week.

Madame President,

The very purpose of the Mine Ban Convention is “to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel landmines.” For the last several years, it is believed that the new use of landmines has been decreasing. Nevertheless, the number of victim remains around several thousands a year. It means that we must remain focused on and intensify our efforts for victim assistance.

In this regard, the Government of Japan would like to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance for preparing a report to this conference on the current state of victim assistance in the VA26 countries.

Madame President,

Assistance to capacity building on victim assistance is an area in which the Government of Japan intends to further strengthen its efforts. While encouraging self-reliance through capacity building in affected countries, the Government of

Japan is placing importance on such projects that transfer knowledge and skills.

Japan is also extending assistance to community-based projects in order to eradicate the threat that landmines pose to the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people. For instance, in Colombia over the past five years Japan has been granting assistance to improve the quality of rehabilitation services for landmine victims by providing training for Colombian rehabilitation specialists and by assisting the formulation of medical protocols and coordinated implementation plans. Other examples of similar Japanese projects can be found in Sudan, Bosnia Herzegovina and Lebanon, where we cooperate with multiple international organizations taking advantage of their comparative expertise and experience in the field.

Madame President,

For implementing victim assistance, cooperating with NGOs that operate at the grass-roots level is indispensable. And the Government of Japan undertakes close cooperation with Japanese and other NGOs. For example, we have been providing support to, the Association for Aid and Relief Japan, for its wheelchair workshop project in Lao PDR. In the workshop, they produce wheelchairs which meet the needs of each recipient, paying due consideration to their disability and their daily activities. To date this project has achieved a high level of success, with the number of wheelchairs produced leaping dramatically and the distribution expanding to the whole country.

Furthermore, this year, the Government, the Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines (JCBL) and AAR Japan, jointly conducted a needs survey in Cambodia and Laos PDR. The survey focused on the landmine and unexploded ordnance policies of those two countries within their respective development plans.

Madame President,

I would like to end my brief remarks by reminding everyone that during lunch time tomorrow the Delegation of Japan will hold a side event on victim assistance in cooperation with AAR Japan. We look forward to seeing you at the event tomorrow.

Thank you for your attention.