

Statement by the Austrian delegation (Ms Monika Fröhler), 09.05.06

Victim Assistance/Cooperation and Assistance

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Let me start my brief intervention by commending you and your co-chair for your efforts in chairing the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance.

In my delegation's view, assisting landmine victims is one of the corner-stones of the AP Mine Ban Convention. In fact, it forms a *raison d'être*. We, therefore, see a continued need to further do our utmost in providing the care and rehabilitation, including the socio-economic reintegration of mine victims to live up to the vital promise contained in the Convention. Austria endeavours to do its share.

At the end of 2005 Austria adopted a **new strategy** for Austrian mine action cooperation and assistance that delineates the guiding principles for our activities in that regard until the year 2009. The strategy envisages a geographical focus on South Eastern Europe, but foresees the creation of a second focus in Africa.

Under our new strategy up to 40% of the projects in the African region financed by Austria are expected to be in the area of victim assistance and Mine Risk Education. In South Eastern Europe 20 % of the projects will be on victim assistance.

In the year 2005 Austria contributed the total amount of 1,8 Million € to bilateral mine action projects on top of Austria's share in assistance provided by the European Community. In 2006 Austria intends to increasingly integrate victim assistance into health sector programs as well as Mine Risk Education into the education sector of bilateral programs.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.