



**GENEVA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DEMINING
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS, 25-29 MAY 2009**

**ASSISTING ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE SURVIVORS
IN REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

Since the year 2004, the situation for landmine survivors is much better now than before. First all landmine survivors in Serbia are enclosed within the system of health care on all levels.

The Serbian Government has signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. Also, has adopted:

- the strategy for the improvement of status of persons with disabilities;
- the strategy for fighting poverty,
- the strategy for the development of social care system,
- the law on prevention of discrimination of persons with disabilities,
- the law on privileges for persons with disabilities in the public transportation system;
- the regulation, that provides the liberation of the paying the participation for medical treatment and orthopaedic aids for the great number of the insured and their families whose incomes are lower than the agreed minimal earnings, including the military war-invalids, civil war-invalids and others;

The experts from The Center for self-supported life from Belgrade and the Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Policy are actively involved in cooperation with the UN on the creation of a design draft for the extensive and integrative Convention on promotion and protection of rights of persons with disabilities.

The goals for the period from 2005 until 2015, is :

- To implement the question of persons with disabilities in the general development plans including the construction of institutional frame and operationalisation of multi – sector and multi department cooperation on planning activities and monitoring of policy within this area.

- Efficient development of legal aid and conduction of plans for the prevention of discrimination of persons with disabilities, as well as plans for sensibilisation of society concerning the question of disability.
- Social and Health care and other services based on rights and needs available to users, accordingly to modern day internationally accepted methods of evaluation of disabilities and needs.
- To develop policy measures and apply programs, especially in the areas of education, employment, work and residency, that allow persons with disabilities , equal opportunities and encourage self-support, personal development and active life in all of its segments.
- To ensure access to an urban environment, including access able public transportation, information posts, communications and other public services through development and conduction of removal of barriers and the construction of access able facilities and services.
- To insure adequate standard of living and social security for persons with disabilities.

A large obstacle for holistic model of development and monitoring of policy in the area of assisting the persons with disabilities is that still the exact number of anti-personnel mine survivors in all municipalities in Republic of Serbia hasn't been determined. The process of data collecting through the Ministry of Health and Ministries of Social Welfares is going on.

For monitoring of achieved results the Government will form – The Council for implementation of strategy for improvement of status of persons with disabilities, which task is to prepare the summed up reports from ministries and relevant institutions about the activities and achieved results in the area concerned with the improvement of status for persons with disabilities.

There are many laws, that regulate the rights of persons with disabilities and they are not yet harmonized with relevant international laws and regulations. We are aware of that situation and because of it the process of changing and harmonization of laws is going on.

In order to achieve the better and more efficient rehabilitation of landmine survivors. We need to raise the level of:

- P&O services, through the licensed education,
- continuous and update education of all members of rehabilitation team,
- information system for landmine survivors.

For this purpose we need support and cooperation with GOs and NGOs.

Since the landmine survivors in Serbia are usually young persons, able to work, it is necessary to establish Income Generating Projects for their prequalification and employment.

It is necessary to improve the cooperation among the landmine survivors and professionals in all areas that are associated with the treatment and rehabilitation, in the region and in the world.

I also have to stress, that during the past period Serbia has suffered from the economic hardship caused by transition period and now the level poverty is increasing even more because of the global economic crisis. Due to these circumstances is urgently needed to raise funds and to contribute financially to all projects that deal with the improvement of the quality of life of landmine survivors in Serbia.

Finally it is important to mention, that the strategic aim of all these activities is the improvement of status of persons with disabilities and landmine survivors in Serbia, up to the point when they will become equal citizens, who enjoy all their rights and share responsibilities.

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