



### Thematic Session:

#### Victim Assistance: Establishing and Strengthening a centralised database

Tuesday, 22 June 2021, 13:30 – 15:00 CEST

Committee on Victim Assistance

(Algeria, Ecuador, Sweden, Thailand (Chair))

#### Background

While significant progress has been made in implementing the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's Victim Assistance provisions, significant challenges remain in protecting the rights and meeting the needs of anti-personnel mine survivors in a sustainable manner. One persistent challenge reported by States Parties is that of data collection and the absence of a national centralised database<sup>1</sup>, directly affecting various aspects of Victim Assistance including the provisions of healthcare, rehabilitation, psychosocial support, socio and economic inclusion, the development and implementation of plans and policies and the integration of the needs of mine victims into broader frameworks.

Collecting data on mine victims is essential to ensuring a clear understanding of the situation, needs and challenges facing them and to develop plans to provide an appropriate response. The World Health Organization calls data collection in disability “a game changer” in making right decisions and developing effective policies and programmes. From the very beginning, States Parties to the Convention have recognised this challenge and embraced data collection as the first of six pillars in Victim Assistance. The collection and dissemination data are also obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, Article 31) which most States Parties with Victim Assistance responsibilities are a party to<sup>2</sup>.

While data collection on new casualties and on unrecorded mine victims is critical, there are other aspects which require attention. One of these aspects is the transformation of data into information to inform relevant decisions. Another aspect is ensuring national capacity to bring together relevant data, whether collected by government or partners, and make the information available and accessible for the use of relevant policy makers and service providers, as highlighted in the 2020-2024 Oslo Action Plan:

- *“Establish or strengthen a centralised database that includes information on persons killed by mines as well as on persons injured by mines and their needs and challenges, disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and make this information available to relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive response to addressing the needs of mine victims.” (Action #35)*

#### Objectives

In supporting the States Parties with Victim Assistance responsibilities, the panel aims at drawing attention to challenges in data collection and in establishing/strengthening national centralised

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<sup>1</sup> APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1

<sup>2</sup> 27 of the 30 States Parties that have reported having significant numbers of mine survivors in areas under their jurisdiction or control are party to the CRPD, as of May 2021.

database in support of fulfilment of Action 35 of the Oslo Action Plan. The panel also aims to enhance understandings on the significance and importance of data collection and a sustainable national unified database for victim assistance. Finally, the panel aims to provide information to States on good practices and on available assistance.

The panel will offer a space for States Parties to take the floor and offer information on the status of implementation of Action 35 and the challenges they are facing in achieving the objectives of this action.

### **Format**

During this one hour and half virtual interactive discussion, following an opening remark by the Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance, the panellists will address the following questions, before the States Parties with Victim Assistance responsibilities provided updates (3 minutes each) on their work on Action #35:

- *What are the key challenges encountered in data collection and in transforming data into information to support national decision making?*
- *What are some of the key challenges to overcome in establishing/strengthening a national centralised database?*
- *Given the situation and competing priorities, what practical steps can be taken to address these challenges?*
- *What support is available to improve data collection, data analysis and establishing/strengthening centralised database?*

### **Discussion**

**Moderator:** **Worawut Smuthkalin**, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations in Geneva and Chair of the Committee of the Committee on Victim Assistance

- **H.E. Rongvudhi VIRABUTR**, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations in Geneva and Chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance
- **Loren Persi**, Impact Research Team leader, Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, ICBL
- **Riyad Naser Muhanna**, Head of Victim Assistance Section, Directorate for Mine Action (DMA), Ministry of Health and Environment, Iraq
- **Roberta Sarzano**, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Iraq
- **Tabasum Akseer**, Director of Policy and Research, the Asia Foundation Afghanistan

### **Background documents**

- [The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Oslo Declaration, and the Oslo Action Plan](#)
- [Achieving the Aims of the Oslo Action Plan: Draft Progress Report 2019-2020](#)
- [Oslo Action Plan: Status of Implementation](#)
- [Guide to Understanding Victim Assistance in the Context of the AP Mine Ban Convention – CHAPTER 4 | THE BASIS FOR ACTION: UNDERSTANDING THE EXTENT OF THE CHALLENGE](#)