

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - CROATIA

COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Italy, Chile, Sweden and Thailand)

Intersessional Meetings

30 June – 2 July 2020

Observations of the Committee on the information submitted by Croatia.

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Croatia of updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

Mine casualties in 2019

2. The Committee observed that Croatia reported two casualties in 2019, increasing the total number of registered mine/ERW victims to 597. The report states that 131 of the casualties were deminers and that a total of 203 of the victims, including 38 deminers, did not survive the accidents. Croatia also reported conducting a survey to establish a comprehensive database on mine victims with the capacity to assess the needs mine victims.

Establish or strengthen of a centralised database (Action #35)

3. The Committee would welcome information on efforts to establish or strengthen a centralised database for information on mine victims and others, such as persons with disabilities.

Integrating victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Action #33)

4. The Committee observed that Croatia reported, like in previous years, that the rights and needs of mine victims have been steadily integrated into various national legal frameworks, including into national laws and policies related to persons with disabilities. The report states that victim assistance efforts have been addressed through “medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological help and social reintegration and professional and economic rehabilitation” in the country. The Committee would welcome information on efforts that may have been invested to designate a government entity to oversee the integration of victim assistance into broader national frameworks in Croatia.

Developing and implementing measurable, realistic and time-bound national action plan (Action #33)

5. The Committee would welcome information on efforts invested to develop or adapt national action plans in accordance with the Action 33 of the Oslo Action Plan, including information on budgets available for their implementation and consideration of gender and diversity in the plans.

Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)

6. The Committee would welcome information any specific progress made regarding the removal of physical, social, cultural, pollical, attitudinal or communication barriers that may exist and limit mine victims' access to services.

Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)

7. The Committee observed that Croatia reported that the Ministry of the Interior plans to further pursue creation of a Coordination Body in accordance with the Act on Mine Action and with membership of representatives of ministries competent for home affairs, health and war veterans, Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, Croatian Institute of Public Health and other relevant stakeholders.
8. The Committee encourages Croatia to take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure sustainability of support to mine victims.

Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)

9. The Committee observed that Croatia reported on the availability of integrated healthcare for mine victims and that mine casualties have been drastically reduced in recent years with no casualty recorded in 2017 and 2018, and only two casualties in 2019.

Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)

10. The Committee would welcome information on the existence of or plans to develop a national referral mechanism or a national directory of services to ensure mine victims' access to services.

Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy (Action #38)

11. The Committee observed that Croatia reported the integration of victim assistance services including physical rehabilitation into broader health frameworks. The Committee would welcome further information concerning efforts to ensure access of mine survivors to physical rehabilitation services, including information on affordability of the services provided, such as prostheses, orthoses, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)

12. The Committee observed that Croatia reported the availability of psychosocial interdisciplinary centres in all 21 counties of the country, including four regional centres for psychological services providing psychotherapeutic services. The Committee would welcome information on availability of peer-to-peer support in Croatia.

Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)

13. The Committee observed that Croatia reported progressive development in the integration of services including social and economic inclusion into broader frameworks. The Committee would welcome further information on broader frameworks that consider the social and economic needs of mine victims, including in rural and remote areas. The Committee would also welcome information on efforts that may be undertaken to ensure inclusion of victim assistance into national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) plans and policies of Croatia.

Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)

14. The Committee would welcome information on progress made or plans to strengthen measures for the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies including natural disasters, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Action #41)

15. The Committee would welcome information on progress achieved in strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in relevant policies and programmes.

Challenges in implementation of Croatia's Victim Assistance Commitments

16. The Committee would welcome additional information on the remaining main challenges faced by Croatia in the fulfilment of its victim assistance commitments and any specific proposal Croatia may have on how the Committee and the international community could be of assistance to Croatia's victim assistance activities.