

Statement on Victim Assistance
Intersessional Meeting of the Mine Ban Treaty
22-24 May 2019



Thank you, Mr President.

Through two decades of assistance to people injured by explosive ordnance, survivors, to the family members of those people killed and injured, and to affected communities, we have seen a better understanding of the concept of assistance, and the concrete development of services in some sectors and countries. We trust that the Oslo Action Plan will include these elements, which are also known as the pillars of victim assistance.

The Maputo Action Plan highlighted that assistance should be integrated into broader frameworks such as those on health, education and poverty reduction. Before that, the Cartagena Action Plan insisted on measuring the accessibility, availability and adequacy of services. Let's also remember that the pillars of victim assistance include emergency medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological support, and socio-economic inclusion.

We see that the quality of services has improved in many states. But in all those places where international earmarked funding for victim assistance from the global mine action budget was lost, especially in recent years, there were rarely suitable or sustainable resources to replace the lost services or to provide them through broader frameworks.

Providing funding for victim assistance is an investment, and an obligation under Article 6.3; it is not charity. We therefore call for a significant increase in the percentage of dedicated support for victim assistance from the overall mine action! While we often hear of "donor fatigue", it is important to remember the promise and obligations contained in Article 6. 3.

We also call for the mine action community to work much more closely together with broader sectors and related line ministries to ensure a whole-of-government approach to victim assistance, in both affected and donor states.

In the context of integrating victim assistance into broader efforts, accountability to affected populations and sustainability, we strongly urge all States to take step up data collection efforts. These should demonstrate that states' broader action is indeed reaching people injured by explosive ordnance, survivors, and indirect victims, and if not, allow them to take corrective action.

There will be two true indicators of success on victim assistance: first, the availability and quality of services provided, and second, the corresponding improvement in the quality of life of survivors. We have a long way to go on both. This year in Oslo, we look forward to hearing from all states -- both affected and donors -- about their accomplishments under the Maputo Action Plan, but above all we look forward to hearing their commitment for the next five years and beyond.

Thank you.