

**PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE
(Mozambique, Belgium, Chile and Italy)**

Intersessional Meetings 22-24 May 2019

Observations of the Committee on the information submitted by El Salvador

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

Mine casualties

2. The Committee observed that El Salvador reported the occurrence of no mine casualty since 2007 and that there is a total of 4,814 conflict-related casualties registered, including 378 women and 4,536 men, of which 708 persons died.
3. The Committee would welcome age- and gender-disaggregated information on the identified or registered mine victims in El Salvador.

Assessment of needs, the availability and gaps in services (Action #12)

4. The Committee observed that El Salvador is acting upon its commitments under action 12 and reported on achieving the followings in 2017 and 2018 in relation to needs assessments:
 - a. In 2017 and 2018, regular evaluations of activities were carried out by the Disability Evaluation Technical Commission;
 - b. A permanent system is in place at the FOPROLYD (*Fondo de Protección de Lisiados Y Discapacitados A Consecuencia Del Conflicto Armado*) to provide guidance and advice to victims;
 - c. Census for the registration of persons disabled by conflicts including mine survivors is underway;
 - d. And two assessments carried in 2018 to measure the level satisfaction of beneficiaries of services provided by the FOPROLYD, the results showed that an average of 95% of users have been satisfied with the services;
 - e. And in 2019 regular evaluations planned to be carried to ensure the services provided by FOPROLYD meet the needs of victims.
5. The Committee would welcome further information on availability and gaps in services throughout the country as concerned mine victims.

Time-bound and measurable objectives (Action #13)

6. The Committee observed that El Salvador aims to develop a new plan for the period of 2019-2024 that will be inclusive of persons with disabilities, including those disabled by mines and as a result of armed conflicts. The report also stated that in addition, FOPROLYD will develop its own five-year plan with specific strategic objectives to improve assistance to mine victims.
7. The Committee would welcome an electronic copy of the action plans, once adopted.

Enhancement in the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, including the allocation of budgets for their implementations (Actions #14)

8. The Committee observed that El Salvador enhances the provision of services to victims by focusing on the most vulnerable people with the aim to increase comprehensive health services, technical aids, mental health, social and productive inclusion in the country.
9. The Committee would welcome further information on specific efforts that have been made to enhance the integration of victim assistance into broader development, health, poverty reduction and human rights policies and programmes.

Increase availability of and accessibility to rehabilitation services, economic inclusion opportunities and social protection measures for all mine victims, regardless of their gender and age (Action #15)

10. The Committee observed that El Salvador was meeting its commitments under action 15 by pursuing targeted efforts to increase assistance to victims, including by allocating \$54,002,263.00 to provide rehabilitation and socio-economic supports to 19,820 victims of the armed conflict including mine victims in 2019 and by reporting the achievements in 2018 as follows:
 - a. 1,495 victims including mine victims in 2017 and 1,815 in 2018 benefited from rehabilitation services provided by the FOPROLYD;
 - b. There is an increase of 30% in national fund provided to FOPROLYD in the last five years;
 - c. 2,370 victims including mine victims benefited from FOPROLYD's mental health including psychological support and awareness-raising efforts between 2014 to 2018;
 - d. 3,260 victims including mine victims received physiotherapy assistance between 2014 to 2018;
 - e. FOPROLYD created a Mobile Unite to expand services to those in need of assistance in rural and remote areas where there is greater demand for assistance including Western (Santa Ana), Paracentral (San Vicente and Suchitoto, Cuscatlán), Northeast (Meanguera, Morazán) and Southeast (Usulután). FOPROLYD's Mobile Unite is composed of a physician, social workers and rehabilitation technicians;
 - f. FOPROLYD promotes employment of survivors by hiring persons with disabilities, with 18% of its 250 employees being with disabilities;
 - g. Regional offices in strategic areas of the country (San Miguel and Chalatenango) were created and efforts made to bring services closer to users through Mobile Care Units (Cuscatlán, Usulután, San Vicente, Sonsonate and Santa Ana);
 - h. 7 women and 168 men mine victims in 2017 and 11 women and 137 men mine victims were provided healthcare at their homes, through home visit programme;
 - i. Improvements made in the accessibility of the physical rehabilitation services;
 - j. Financial support was maintained to cover mobilization expenses in rehabilitation services;
 - k. Credit programme or micro-loans provided to mine victims to promote income generation with the aim of leading victims to a productive economy;
 - l. Mental health care was carried out at regional and local levels to improve psychological and mental health among victims;
 - m. Monthly pensions provided to persons with disabilities including those acquired disabilities because of conflicts, to family members of those victims with disabilities that have died; to fathers and mothers of combatants who had died during the armed conflicts;
 - n. In 2017-2018 FOPROLYD has provided Vocational Training to 1,139 persons and provided with work tools for the promotion of entrepreneurship by investing non-reimbursable \$ 2,662,640.68 to victims, including family members of victims;
 - o. 1,331 including 409 women and 922 men – victims of armed conflicts including mine victims benefited from \$1,119,635 grants of credit programmes provided by FOPROLYD to support self-employment and income generation among the victims.

Strengthen local capacities and enhance coordination (Action #15)

11. The Committee observed that El Salvador aims at strengthening coordination efforts by planning to reactive an inter-agency/ministerial coordination body that used to be run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be reactivated, with memberships of FOPROLYD and the Ministry of National Defence, among others, in addition to existing coordination and collaboration between FOPROLYD and National Health System, with Military Hospitals, Universities, General Directorate of Penal Centers, Non-governmental Organizations and other stakeholders.
12. The Committee acknowledges efforts to enhance national coordination and would welcome information on when the inter-agency or inter-ministerial coordination body will be reactivated.

Inclusion and participation of mine victims (Actions #16)

13. The Committee observed that EL Salvador reported the inclusion of mine victims in relevant programmes including in the Board of Directors of FOPROLYD and would welcome further information on inclusion and participation of mine victims in other relevant policies and programmes of the country.

Removing barriers and raising awareness (Actions #15 and #17)

14. The Committee observed that EL Salvador reporting efforts in raising awareness including through community radio concerning mental health and hygiene, especially in the aftermath of war and disability.
15. The Committee would welcome further information on efforts that led to removing barriers including physical, attitudinal and communications barriers as concerned mine survivors/persons with disabilities in El Salvador.

Measurable improvements, challenges and priorities for assistance in advance of the next Review Conference (Action #18)

16. The Committee observed that El Salvador reported increasing efforts that demonstrated measurable improvements in many aspects of victim assistance including in areas of rehabilitation, social and economic inclusion, psychological support and medical care, in favour of thousands of conflict-related victims including mine victims and persons with disabilities. The report also stated that there was a need to improve local capacities, increase the use of new technologies and improve coordination and that to meet the needs of victims El Salvador is need of international cooperation and assistance.
17. The Committee commends the significant efforts El Salvador invested to meet the needs of victims and protect their rights and encourages the country to enhance efforts to achieve the objectives and aspirations of actions 12 to 18 of the Maputo Action Plan by the Oslo Review Conference in November 2019.