



## European Union

**EU Statement on Victim Assistance  
16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the  
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention  
Vienna, 18-21 December 2017**

*Check against delivery*

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following countries align themselves with this statement: the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, San Marino and Andorra.

We would like to thank the Committee on Victim Assistance for their conclusions and recommendations regarding the implementation by States Parties of their victim assistance commitments. In particular, we would like to thank the Committee for actively seeking to reinforce cooperation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and other relevant human rights and disability actors and instruments.

For the EU, victim assistance is a core component of our mine action policies. We agree that in order for victim assistance efforts to be sustainable in the long run, they need to be integrated into broader disability policies. The EU also emphasises the importance that survivors participate in decision- and policy-making on issues affecting them and other spheres of society, on an equal basis and in a sustainable way.

The EU is actively supporting the efforts of States Parties to fulfil their victim assistance commitments. This is illustrated by a new project, funded under the EU Council Decision, which will support up to five States Parties to implement the victim assistance aspects of the Maputo Action Plan. The project aims at empowering those who are injured by mines and indirect victims such as family member. National stakeholder dialogues will incorporate gender and diversity aspects of victim assistance at the design, management and implementation levels. The Convention's Committee on Victim Assistance will be involved in the selection of the beneficiary States Parties.

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\* Candidate Countries Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

With the support of the previous EU Council Decision, a global conference entitled ‘Bridges between Worlds’ was organized in Medellin, Colombia, in 2014, to advance the international community's understanding regarding the place of victim assistance in a broader context. As a follow-up, the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Ottawa Convention will organise another international conference for national experts to explore challenges and good practices in integrating victim assistance into broader disability and development policies at national level. In particular, the international conference will help to strengthen linkages and contribute to efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) with a view to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Various stakeholders will be involved, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the relevant EU entities, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC) and organisations of disabled persons. The international conference will build upon the work of the Committee on Victim Assistance of this Convention and representatives of other relevant instruments, such as the Victim Assistance Coordinators of the Cluster Munitions Convention (CCM) and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

According to the Landmine Monitor, an exceptionally high number of people were recorded as killed or injured by landmines and explosive remnants of war in 2016. This only emphasises the need to step up our efforts on victim assistance in the period leading to 2025 and beyond.

Thank you, Mr. President