



Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and
Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction

17th Meeting of States-Parties

Geneva, Switzerland

27 November 2018

Statement by Ireland on Victim Assistance

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Madam President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union; I will add the following remarks in our national capacity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee on Victim Assistance for their work, and to express Ireland's support for the conclusions and recommendations circulated last month. Ireland particularly welcomes the recommendation to strengthen synergies with human rights and disability actors, and to increase coherence between those addressing matters concerning Victim Assistance and Cooperation and Assistance within sister-Conventions.

Promoting efforts that enhance better coordination on victim assistance and international cooperation with other disarmament conventions can contribute to the overall strengthening of these importance disarmament instruments. As Co-Coordinator for Victim Assistance on the Convention on Cluster Munitions for the period 2018-2019, Ireland will work to encourage closer coordination with the Ottawa Convention's Committee on Victim Assistance in order to promote our shared aims.

We also particularly support the commitment to increase attention to gender and the Sustainable Development Goals and their links to Victim Assistance. Ireland considers assistance to and empowerment of victims as a key step in our efforts to build a peaceful and sustainable future for all.

Madam President,

The Ottawa Convention was the first multilateral arms control treaty to address the humanitarian needs of victims of a particular weapon system. For Ireland, Victim Assistance is a core element of our mine action and international development aid policies. The devastating impacts of anti-personnel mines do not only affect those killed or injured by them, but also have a lasting impact on

their families, communities and the populations still living in fear of unexploded landmines. As long as anti-personnel mines are produced, stockpiled and used, people will continue to be made victims and survivors of these mines.

Ireland fully supports efforts outlined in the Maputo Action Plan to give more definition and specificity to Victim Assistance such as the submission of ‘time-bound and measurable objectives’ in Annual Transparency Reports. We acknowledge the work done thus far in this area by states and by the Committee on Victim Assistance and the Implementation Support Unit. We encourage States with victims of anti-personnel mines to provide high quality information concerning their implementation of the Maputo Action Plan.

Ireland recognises that the effort to implement the Victim Assistance provision of the Convention must consist of nationally led processes with the full and effective participation of landmine survivors and affected communities. Ireland believes the full participation and empowerment of victims and survivors is essential in delivering effective processes. Ireland also recognises the complementarity which exists between this Convention and other human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Many survivors of anti-personnel landmines have disabilities, whether physical and psychological, and Ireland acknowledges the importance of the CRPD in protecting their rights. We support efforts to further discuss how best to utilise these instruments for the benefit of landmine survivors and their communities.

Finally, Ireland wishes to recognise organisations such as the ICBL and ICRC for their unwavering commitment to the Convention. We would also like to sincerely thank those survivors of anti-personnel mines who have added their voices and experiences to the struggle to ensure this Convention’s full and effective implementation.

Thank you for the floor, Madam President.