



Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
17th Meeting of the States Parties
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Statement by HE Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato
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Victim Assistance

Madam President,

First of all, I would like to join other delegations in expressing our appreciation for the work conducted by the Committee on Victim Assistance, and for the conclusions and recommendations it submitted to this Meeting.

In particular, Italy is thankful to the Committee for its efforts aimed at strengthening synergies across relevant Conventions. We have consistently advocated the importance of building cooperation on thematic areas that are common across the Ottawa and Oslo conventions, as well as Protocol V of the CCW, in order to make maximum use of scarce resources and ensure more coherent implementation approaches. We promoted such an approach in our capacity as Coordinators on VA in the framework of the CCM and will support further efforts in this direction within this Convention, should this MSP endorse our candidature as a member of the Committee on Victim Assistance.

We also welcome the Committee's activities aimed to reinforce cooperation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and other relevant human rights and disability actors and instruments.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Madam President,

For the past two decades, the Ottawa Convention has played a key role in putting an end to the long-term devastating effects of anti-personnel landmines on people's lives and on countries' social and economic fabrics. In approaching the 4th Review Conference, we must celebrate our joint achievements but also recognize that much remains to be done, particularly in relation to victim assistance.

Responding completely and effectively to victims' needs requires cooperation among different actors, and across different policy areas, as well as adequate information to establish victims' needs. Perhaps most of all, effective victim assistance requires long-term commitment. In this sense, Italy notes with concern the Committee's conclusion that lack of adequate funding remains a significant challenge for States Parties' VA efforts.

In order to address these challenges more effectively, information provided by States Parties through their art. 7 reports is fundamental. We are pleased with the increase in the number of reports submitted in 2018 compared to last year, and with the general improvement in the quality of the information submitted. We particularly welcome that most of the reports provided information disaggregated by sex and age, especially concerning casualties. At the same time, we regret that some of the States Parties that have reported significant numbers of mine victims have not submitted yet updated information on

their efforts to implement VA commitments. Mindful that VA reporting can be a challenge, we support the Committee's conclusion that reaching out to the Committee and the Convention's ISU for guidance could be beneficial.

We also support the Committee's conclusion that States in need of assistance should consider participating in the Convention's "individualized approach" led by the Committee of the enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, as a very useful opportunity to communicate their needs and discuss directly with potential donors how to address them.

Madam President,

Victim assistance lies at the core of humanitarian emergency, but extends far beyond it. Victims' needs are complex and multifaceted, thus requiring comprehensive and tailored responses.

In Italy's view VA, in order to be effective, should be sustainable, integrated, and inclusive. Let me briefly elaborate on these principles, which are at the core of our policies and programmes.

First, VA efforts should be seen not only as a component of humanitarian action, but also as an integral part of States' development policies. When properly designed and implemented, VA policies and programs fully contribute to, and benefit from, efforts towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Second, we are convinced of the need to adopt an integrated approach to VA. On the one hand, this means that resources devoted to victim assistance must adhere to the principle of non-discrimination, benefiting survivors, indirect victims and other persons with disabilities alike. On the other hand, it is essential that assistance to mine and ERW victims is included in broader development, human rights, and humanitarian programs.

Finally, it is necessary for VA efforts to be gender- and diversity-sensitive, in order to enable responses that adequately address the different needs of different beneficiaries.

In line with the above, Italy's assistance programs target survivors as well as their families and communities, focusing both on their psycho-physical rehabilitation, and on their socio-economic reintegration.

Italy also fulfills its VA obligations through non-mine action funding. For example, last year we allocated 3 Million Euro over 3 years to the "Program for Humanitarian Impact Investment", implemented with the International Committee of the Red Cross, other donors and private sector partners. The programme foresees the construction of 3 rehabilitation centers for persons with disabilities, including mine victims, in Mali, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Madam President,

In 2017, Italy supported victim assistance programmes in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Palestine and Somalia. To make a few concrete examples, we allocate yearly 500,000 Euros to the ICRC-assisted project on the physical rehabilitation of mine/ERW survivors in Afghanistan, within the framework of the ICRC's "Special Mine Action Appeal".

Also, Italy devoted 150,000 Euros to contribute to the ICRC Moveability Foundation activities in the medical and health sector in Somalia, helping provide access to emergency medical and psychological support to persons with disabilities as well as mines and ERW victims. Similar activities were funded in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a contribution of 250,000 Euros. Further, Italy supported physical rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration programmes in Colombia, through the OAS, and the activities carried out by UNMAS in Palestine on ERW clearance, risk assessment and risk education.

Italy has devoted, since 2001, close to 55m EUR to Mine Action programmes, including VA projects. For 2018, we have allocated a total of 3,7 million euros to this endeavor, slightly increasing our contributions in comparison with 2017.

Thank you, Madam President.