

Statement by Norway on Victim Assistance (agenda item 9 a) delivered during the 17th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Convention, Geneva, 26-30 November 2018.

Tuesday 27 November 2018.

Thank you, Madam President,

I would like to thank the Committee on Victim Assistance for their work and for their conclusions and recommendations submitted to this meeting.

The victim assistance obligations of the Mine Ban Convention have provided an important contribution to global efforts to promote the rights of individuals with physical disabilities. It is clear that our understanding of these obligations has matured since the adoption of the Convention. There is now widespread acceptance of the principles of non-discrimination, integration, and a holistic and rights-based approach, with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as an overarching framework. Norway warmly welcomes this normative development.

We all agree that our efforts should aim at the full enjoyment of the rights of victims, including access to all relevant services and full inclusion in society. Assistance must be tailored to meet the victim's needs, in an age- and gender- sensitive way, in order to be effective. The victim assistance schemes in the Mine Ban Convention as well as in the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) should be considered *tools towards these aims*. These weapon-specific conventions alone cannot deliver on our promise to victims. We must therefore view the rights of victims and our obligations to uphold these rights as part of a much broader health, development and socio-economic agenda.

The MBC, the CCM and the CRPD constitute a mutually reinforcing framework in the implementation of victim assistance. Assistance to persons with disabilities under these different instruments should be promoted at the national level, involving all institutions and stakeholders in the process. In particular, victims of landmines, cluster munitions and other persons with disabilities must be involved. Such an approach will allow us to strengthen their rights beyond what could be achieved under each specific instrument.

For example, we should explore and identify where and how our work within the MBC and the CCM can provide *an added value* and highlight aspects that are not given sufficient space and attention in the CRPD. We should also look at how we can make best use of the efforts and mandates of other organizations and mechanisms. In this respect, we commend the Committee for the work done to strengthen synergies with human rights and disability actors, and to engage with other organizations, like the World Health Organisation.

We look forward to participating in these discussions at our meetings this week and in the time to come. We encourage states parties and other stakeholders to present their views on how the challenges and opportunities in this area can be reflected in the next Action Plan, to be adopted at the fourth review conference in Oslo next year.

Thank you.