



## **BELGIUM**

### **18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - November 2020**

#### **Victim Assistance**

Belgium aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Belgium is committed to the objective of a mine free world, but also of a world free of new or unassisted mine victims. We are very concerned with the increase in mine casualties over the past years.

Victim assistance is a humanitarian imperative. Mine survivors should receive all assistance needed to allow them to achieve full and equal participation in society. At the national level, this calls for the integration of victim assistance into broader national policies and programs. At the international level, we should look for synergy with other relevant conventions and mechanisms. In this regard, we welcome the participation of the Committee on Victim Assistance in debates at the Human Rights Council, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW Protocol V). Building bridges between Conventions will also benefit efforts in favor of universalization and will advance effective multilateralism.

Already 20 years ago, the Security Council acknowledged that specific action had to be taken regarding the needs of women and girls in mine action, when it adopted its resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. While celebrating the second decade of this landmark resolution, we have to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in the global response against anti-personnel landmines, including in the field of victim assistance.

Belgium therefore applauds the 16 States that reported, under action 3 of the Oslo Action Plan, that they had taken into account the diverse needs and gender equality in relation to meeting the needs of mine survivors.