



Statement by Turkey

18th MEETING OF STATE PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION MATTERS RELATED TO THE MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

18 November 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Mr. President,

Since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor let me congratulate your Presidency. You can count on our support.

Turkey aligned itself with the EU statement and in our national capacity we would like to deliver the following statement.

We would like to thank the Committee on Victim Assistance for their efforts and for the informative report they presented.

We would like to share shortly information on the efforts for victim assistance by my country. Due to the time constraint I will read a short version of the statement, complete version will be delivered to the ISU in due time.

-Regarding Mine Victim Data, in order to improve sustainable flow of information, a communication line with relevant ministries and bodies was established. The Ministry of Health set up a new module for civilian mine victims in the “Health Management System” in Turkey, in order to monitor and assist mine victims easier. Mine/Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) incidents have individual codification in the national health system. **Mine victims data bank has established and uploaded to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) in accordance with Action 9 of the Oslo Action Plan.**

The Ministry of Interior conveys to TURMAC all information on mine and munition accidents in areas under their responsibility in both one month and three months periods by means of all (81) governors offices.

Information management and data collection, as well as laws and policies that improve human rights for persons with disabilities, have become an important part of victim aid activities. The state provides mine victims with the necessary assistance through the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services by documenting the situation of them with health report and case investigation reports through their local authority.

In Turkey, 100 mine/ IED casualties were identified from relevant sources in 2019. The data of 46 soldiers mine victims were recorded together with a total of 54 civilians. According to the data obtained, 16 of 100 victims lost their lives. In comparison with the data of 2018, there is an increase in mine or IED casualties, but significant decrease on death toll. Detailed information, including the gender dimension is available in Article 7 report. **Almost all of the identified casualties consist of IEDs activated by the victims. Here, I would like to emphasize that the impacts of minefields in Turkey to locals is minimum as these areas are fenced and marked as military zones.**

-On Social Inclusion, due to the coordination, which has been established between the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services and TURMAC, regarding Ministry's Strategic Plan 2020-2025, victims of the Mines/IED's have the opportunity to reintegrate into society by means of certain privileges provided for them and their families. Further development of the technical and legal infrastructure is planned, in which social assistance is provided in an integrated manner.

There are ongoing studies on mine risk education. In this context, a MRE (Mine Risk Education) presentation and a MRE survey were prepared for public, including school children who live in the vicinity of mine contaminated areas, in order to recognize mines, increase awareness about the danger and the knowledge regarding course of actions against potential dangers as well as to find out from which organisations to ask for help in case of need. To realize this purpose, school children in the vicinity of contaminated areas will get MRE sessions by MRE specialists.

-Regarding medical care, in Turkey, services in the scope of victim assistance provided by private and state-funded rehabilitation centres include, emergency health service and permanent health service, physical rehabilitation and psychological support to re-adapt mine/IED victims socially and economically who became disabled.

Various plans and programs are prepared to meet needs of mine/IED victims at an appropriate level. Turkish Government has a commitment to

examine the mine victims who are in need of care and assistance and to maintain their care in social service organizations as long as it is needed.

In terms of accessibility, the mine victims benefit from social, economic and psychological opportunities due to the stakeholder engagement between TURMAC and the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. Transportation service is provided by the said Ministry for mine victims to ensure their access to rehabilitation centres. The Law on the Disabled People, The Regulation on victims' accessibility to the domestic tourism transport service was published and came into force on 13 January 2017.

With the implementation of "Turkish Armed Forces Rehabilitation and Care Centre Project", revitalizing victims' joy of life has become the common goal. The main purpose of the organization is to prepare a healthy, prosperous and a self-sufficient future for victims. It is made possible for victims to integrate into social life by various social events. In this context, occupational therapy and participation in vocational rehabilitation unit facilities are provided for victims in order to make them more active during their daily lives.

On economic inclusion, Social and economic support was provided to 4515 mine/IED victims within the scope of the Program of Public Quota for Disabled in 2019. We want to highlight that almost all of the casualties were caused by IEDs used in terrorist acts in Turkey. Turkey's all minefields are fenced and constantly observed by military personnel to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians.

Within the scope of victim assistance, priority is given to ensure victims' social and economic welfare in financial and technical terms. For mine victims it is important to participate in economic and social life. In particular, **targets and policies are being created in areas that will bring more participation in employment and social life.** In addition, it is aimed to provide some opportunities such as encouraging their employment, ensuring their participation in the labour market and providing wage and retirement benefits.

[Lastly Mr. President/Mr Coordinator, since there were references in some previous statements suggesting engagement or creating synergy between ISU's of different Conventions, we would like to remind once again that the membership composition of the Conventions differ from each other, and therefore this issue should be broadly considered before taking any further steps.]

Thank you, Mr. President.