

## **PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS**

### **STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – TAJIKISTAN**

#### **COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE**

(Algeria, Ecuador, Sweden and Thailand)

Intersessional Meetings

22-24 June 2021

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Tajikistan of updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

#### **Mine casualties**

2. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported 3 casualties including 2 deminers and 1 shepherd in 2020. Tajikistan further reported that this brings the total number of registered mine and explosive remnants of war casualties to 882, of which 533 have survived and 349 have been killed and approximately 27 to 30 percent were children at the time of their accidents. The Committee would welcome additional information on impairment/disability of the mine victims.

#### **VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACTIONS:**

**Strengthen partnerships and integrate victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Action #33 and also Actions #1 and #6)**

3. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) is the government's entity with responsibility to oversee the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, including to coordinate victim assistance efforts with relevant national ministries and stakeholders. Tajikistan reported that TNMAC leads a Victim Assistance Technical Working Group (VATWG), which includes representatives from all relevant ministries and other stakeholders and holds regular meetings in the capital and regions.

**Develop and implement measurable, realistic and time-bound national action plan (Action #33 and also Action #2)**

4. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that its national mine action strategy for 2021-2030 includes victim assistance with specific, measurable, realistic and time-bound objectives and the Strategy was being translated into English.
5. The Committee would welcome information on integration of victim assistance commitments into other existing plans, such as disability, health or social protection plans.

**Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)**

6. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported efforts to remove physical barriers that limit the participation of landmine survivors and persons with disabilities in their community, including in rural and remote areas of Tajikistan. In accordance with the CRPD, national law on Social Protection of the People with Disabilities, Urban Code and Tajikistan Accessibility

Standards, all new public buildings must improve accessibility through the construction of access ramps. Tajikistan further reported that in February 2021 a national programme “Accessible Environment 2021-2025” was approved by the government.

7. The Committee would welcome Tajikistan reporting on further information on efforts to remove any barriers that may hinder social and economic inclusion and participation of mine victims in Tajikistan.

**Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)**

8. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported on the continued engagement of different sectors including with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population (MOHSPP), Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour, Local Authorities, UN agencies, Red Crescent Society Tajikistan (RCST) and NGOs, including public organisations of persons with disabilities and landmine survivors, through their memberships to TNMAC’s VATWG.
9. The Committee also observed that while currently being a signatory to the CRPD, Tajikistan has made efforts to align victim assistance efforts with provisions of the CRPD and reported on a national process being undertaken to ratify the CRPD. The Committee would welcome continued updates on developments and results of these efforts.

**Establish or strengthen of a centralised database / national information management system (Action #35 and also Action #9)**

10. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that since 2019 TMAC has been using IMSMA Core as its national information management system for overall mine action activities, including information on persons killed and injured by mines and information on their needs and challenges, disaggregated by gender, age and types of disability. Tajikistan further reported that this information is available for the use of relevant partners and stakeholders and contains information collected by the ICRC and RCST.
11. The Committee observed that Tajikistan also reported that a centralised national disability database is in place and contains all disability related data including the number of all persons with disabilities categorised by severity of impairments. The report stated that the database does not include a separate category for “landmine survivors” instead they are categorized according to the degrees of their impairments and that it is maintained by the State Service of Medical and Social Expertise.
12. The Committee would welcome information on measures that ensure the inclusion of the 533 mine survivors into the national centralised disability database.

**Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)**

13. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported availability of first aid including in mine-affected communities, with support of volunteers of RCST and the Ministry of Defense at the request of TNMAC. In 2020, two seriously injured deminers were evacuated and TNMAC insists on timely evacuation as it significantly improves outcomes of emergency medical care and further treatment of landmine survivors. The report also states that Tajikistan will increase its first aid capacity with additional 94 ambulances that will be made available through the country's cooperation with the Government of Japan.

14. The Committee would welcome further information on efforts to ensure mine victims' access to healthcare, including in rural and remote areas.

**Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)**

15. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported since 2014 the existence of a national referral mechanism and a comprehensive directory of services used to facilitate mine victims' access to services which is maintained by TNMAC in cooperation with the MOHSPP with support of NGOs and public organizations of persons with disabilities and landmine survivors.

**Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy (Action #38)**

16. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that all landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities in Tajikistan have access to comprehensive rehabilitation (e.g. assistive devices, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and peer-to-peer support programs) and psychological and psychosocial support services including through the provision of outreach rehabilitation service. Tajikistan further reported that the public provision of assistive products is provided by the State Enterprise Orthopaedic Plant (SEOP) under the MOHSPP in the capital, with branches in Khujand, Kulyab and Khorog, in cooperation with WHO.

**Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)**

17. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported implementing peer to peer support since 2012 in four regions and that there is a need for a refresher training in peer to peer support. Tajikistan also reported that TNMAC hosts an annual Summer Rehabilitation Workshops in sanatoriums to provide medical treatment as well as psychological rehabilitation and training. Since 2005 more than 750 landmine survivors have benefitted from summer rehabilitation workshops activities. Psychological support to landmine survivors is provided by the Central District Hospitals and by trained doctors and nurses in mine-affected districts.

18. The Committee would welcome additional information on the availability and efforts to provide psychological and psychosocial support services, and peer-to-peer support services in rural and remote areas.

**Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)**

19. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that the economic inclusion of landmine/explosive remnants of war victims in Tajikistan was ensured through income-generating programmes of the RCST in three cities and districts of Sugd and Rasht regions in addition to support provided by the ICRC, TNMAC and other partners. More than 800 landmine victims were provided with social and economic assistance.

**Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)**

20. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported the inclusion of the needs of persons with disabilities including mine survivors into the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2019-2030. Tajikistan reported that landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities, can be disproportionately affected and that this has been evident during the current crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Tajikistan reported that, in this regard, accessible information about prevention of the COVID-19 with focus on the persons with disabilities was developed by the

National Association of Persons with Disabilities in cooperation with the MOHSP and WHO and it has been televised frequently.

**Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Action #41 and also Action #4)**

21. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that mine survivors and their representative organizations continue to participate in the work of the Victim Assistance Technical Working Group and in other relevant efforts and events ensuring that their needs are considered in relevant policy and programmes, including in the National Strategy of Tajikistan.

**CROSS - CUTTING ACTIONS:**

**Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including [...] by making financial and other commitments to implementation (Action #1)**

22. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that in 2020 it has allocated USD 48,600 to mine action activities in the country and USD 480,000 in the form of technical and non-technical support to facilitate the implementation of the country's obligations under the Convention. The Committee acknowledges Tajikistan's commitment to implementation, and it would welcome further information on financial commitments allocated to assist mine victims, from the reported amounts or other financial sources.

**Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered (Action #3)**

23. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported that all women, girls, boys and men have equal opportunities to benefit from and contribute to mine action services provided by TNMAC, including victim assistance, with women employed as paramedics and deminers in accordance with national laws. Tajikistan also reported that it will develop a national policy on gender, age and diversity in accordance with Tajikistan's new mine action strategy's objective.

**Challenges in implementation of Victim Assistance Commitments (Action #8)**

24. The Committee observed that Tajikistan reported the following challenges facing its victim assistance efforts:

- Mine Action database is kept in "cloud" which need a local server with supporting facilities to keep the national database online;
- Despite the improvement in the quality of diagnosis and treatment of mine victims, there is still a shortage of experienced specialists in the field of rehabilitation, advanced medical and diagnostic equipment and assistive devices;
- State's Accessibility Standards were not always observed in constructions of buildings and social facilities (educational, medical, sports facilities and cultural buildings) therefore are not fully accessible for people with disabilities;
- Rural areas are still in great need of financial and technical support to improve the provision of emergency medical care to meet the ongoing needs of mine survivors;
- Around 700 people with disabilities are on the waiting list for various types of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, prosthetic and orthotic services and other assistive devices; and
- COVID-19 crisis has been negatively influencing the economic conditions of landmine survivors and affected families.

25. The Committee would welcome information on how the international community could be of further support to Tajikistan's efforts in fulfilling its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.