



**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT, VETERAN AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

**20th MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES**

**To the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of  
Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction**

**Geneva, 21-25 November 2022**

**Victim Assistance**

Distinguished President, distinguished delegates,

The delegation of the Republic of Serbia would like to use this opportunity to express our pleasure at participating in the work of the 20th Meeting of the States Parties and congratulate and commend Colombia on their able Presidency.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs is responsible for ensuring the protection, rights and financial support of disabled veterans, civilians disabled in war and their family members. In accordance with the Law on the Rights of Disabled Veterans, Civilians disabled in War and Members of Their Families, this Ministry maintains a single record of data on beneficiaries of rights in the field of veterans' and disability protection. Upon inspection of the records, and according to data from December 2021, the records include: 696 civilians disabled in war, 218 family members of deceased civilian disabled in war and family members of civilians disabled in war, i.e. 125 deceased civilians disabled in war, as well as 93 family members of civilian war victims. All persons recorded were injured by anti-personnel mines or other explosive remnants of war.

In order to find a solution for adequate assistance that would be provided to the victims of anti-personnel mines, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs organized several meetings with representatives of relevant institutions in the Republic of Serbia and representatives of associations that aim to help victims of anti-personnel mines and that operate in this area in order to exchange experiences.

Also, a meeting was held with representatives of the Mine Action Centre, the ITF International Foundation for Enhancing Human Security and the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel mines from Geneva, where conclusions were reached regarding the implementation of the victim assistance project.

In 2022, the first project to help victims was started in cooperation with the Mine Action Centre, which is being implemented thanks to donor funds, placed through the ITF International Foundation for Enhancing Human Security. This project provides the rehabilitation and medical care of victims of anti-personnel mines. The Ministry of Labour, Employment of Veterans and Social Affairs, the Sector for Veterans and Disability Protection has prioritized the persons of the younger population from the Republic of Serbia who will be referred to rehabilitation and medical care at the University Rehabilitation Institute of Soča in Slovenia. In October, the implementation of the project started and one person was sent to the assessment and then to the rehabilitation process. As the entire process was evaluated by the beneficiary as useful, we expect that the next beneficiaries will soon be sent to rehabilitation. In addition to rehabilitation, which lasts two and a half weeks, this project also includes the replacement of orthopedic aids.

Having in mind that this project initiated the joint cooperation of the state institutions of the Republic of Serbia, the Mine Action Centre and the Ministry of labour, employment, veteran and social affairs, as well as that by implementing the project we contribute to raising awareness for continuous support for the victims, as well as their family members, the fact arises that this is an important issue for the Republic of Serbia.

This form of support is important to the victims, not only as a form of material assistance, but also as a significant support that gives them the strength to fight with all problems and the certainty that the community supports them, does not forget about them and creates conditions for equality and equity.

The Republic of Serbia wants a better standard for its citizens and pays special attention to people with disabilities, victims of anti-personnel mines, and will always be involved in all activities that affect the development of society's awareness and empower victims of anti-personnel mines.

Thank you for your attention