

Twenty-First Meeting of the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines

*Statement by Ms. Amalia Gamio
Vice-Chair person of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

***Your Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,***

I am honoured to address to you today on the occasion of the Twenty-First Meeting of the States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

As Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, I am delighted to observe that many States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines are likewise States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UNCRPD.

I also appreciate the continuous engagement of the Committee on Victim Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, for instance the participation of Committee members and the Committee's Secretariat during the Third Global Conference on Victim Assistance held in Cambodia, recently. We appreciate our collaboration with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention community who have already embraced a human based approach in their work to realise the rights of mine victims.

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The Committee **wishes to encourage States parties to strengthen their actions to address the situation of mine survivors with disabilities**, while adhering to the human rights of persons with disabilities recognized in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the main and specific international legal framework applicable to all persons with disabilities, including those whose impairments are caused by anti-personnel mines or other explosive ordnances.

Article 11 of the UNCRPD requires States parties take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the **protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk**, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters. This provision conveys States parties to the CRPD and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention to ensure the human rights of mine survivors with disabilities, their safety and protection.

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The Committee observes that the **review of the Oslo Action Plan** envisaged for 2024 and that a new Action Plan will be developed for the next five-years, is an excellent opportunity to reinforce key actions that State parties would have to undertake.

I, therefore, would like to recall some of the elements of the human rights model of disability that would build on progress you have already made to reinforce that victim assistance fulfils the obligations of States parties, pursuant to the CRPD:

First, adhering to the CRPD means to ensure that survivors with disabilities are recognised as subjects of rights rather than service recipients. This entails that legislation and actions taken in the scope of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention promote and uphold autonomy, self-determination, equality and active participation and involvement of mine survivors with disabilities in all areas of life. Services in the community, such as education, health, habilitation and rehabilitation should be oriented to allow for active participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, eliminating segregation in access to services.

Second, fulfilling the UNCRPD, also requires the States parties to identify intersectional discrimination and requirements for inclusion of mine survivors including children internally displaced persons and women. By recognizing barriers to inclusion in society and to access services in the community, measures to provide victim assistance will also foster equality and prevent discrimination. Children do make about half of civilian casualties. The evidence of higher risks, the number of casualties on children and the impacts in their lives in the community and development should have a specific attention by stakeholders involved in victim assistance. The recommendations, general comments, and interpretative guidance of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provide examples on how to uphold the rights of children with disabilities.

Third, upholding the rights of survivors with disabilities requires to raise awareness about the dignity and rights of mine-survivors with disabilities with the aim to eliminate stigmatization, bullying, harassment related to impairment. It also requires actions to prevent disability stereotypes. Trainings to personnel involved on primary response to casualties, including health personnel should include participation of mine-survivors with disabilities, and their perspectives.

Allow me also to stress the importance of **close consultations with and the active involvement of mine survivors with disabilities** through their representative organizations, in public decision-making processes to adopt and develop programmes that include them and address their requirements. Decisions about social protection policies defining social allowances, including insurances should include and address mine survivors with disabilities, on an equal basis with others; implementation of housing programmes, should consider accessibility requirements related to impairment.

States should strengthen representative organizations of mine survivors, including children mine survivors and ensure that their opinions are expressly considered in the design of policies to respond to their situation.

We, the CRPD community and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention should foster partnerships and collaboration at national, regional and international level.

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The Committee wishes members of the Victim Assistance Committee active discussions and renewed inspiration in the days ahead.

Thank you!

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