

Mr President,

Thank you for giving us the floor, and as this is the first time we take the floor, let me start by congratulate you on your appointment, and thank you to you, your team, the ISU and the committee members for the hard work for our convention.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our partners in clearance, risk education and victim assistance, and for their valuable work for the mine ban treaty since its start in the 1990s,

Also thank you very much to the coordinators and Uganda for their report.

As the Oslo Action Plan states, States Parties recognise that for victim assistance to be sustainable in the long term, it should be integrated into national policies and legal frameworks relating to the rights of persons with disabilities as well as into health, education, social, employment, poverty reduction and development plans supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This applies to affected states, but it also applies to other states parties in our policies for support. Norway's overall aim, in our humanitarian strategy, as a donor country and as a humanitarian actor, is to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in humanitarian crises.

In order to engage affected populations, humanitarian organisations need to ensure that all those affected can participate actively in the planning and implementation of the humanitarian response on an equal footing and without discrimination. These are areas that goes beyond clearing of the mines.

This is about protecting human dignity and enabling people to take responsibility for their own lives and health. Vulnerable groups must be included in the planning and implementation of humanitarian efforts in order to ensure that the response is tailored to meet their respective needs.

Mr. President,

In Feb.2022, **Norway's strategy for disability-inclusive development (2022–2025), was launched:**

Equality for all

This strategy provides a foundation for future efforts to promote inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in Norwegian development cooperation, included in humanitarian support. Norway has two primary objectives for its activities in this area:

- i) to promote compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and
- ii) to work proactively to support the core principle of the 2030 Agenda to 'leave no one behind'. This is part of the broader effort to promote gender equality and reduce disparities.

The strategy applies also to Norway's efforts towards VA in our support to Mine Action. We will:

- work with partners (---) to increase reporting on and tracking of efforts to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities; and participation and involvement of persons with disabilities and the organisations' work;

- continue to support the organisations of persons with disabilities so that they can act as advocates and channels representing persons with disabilities – the survivors and victims of explosive ordnance - and enabling them to exercise and claim their rights;
- work to promote equal access for persons with disabilities to health care, and welfare services, (-) and enhance the ability of health personnel to meet the needs of persons with disabilities and to combat discrimination and attitudinal barriers;

In addition to our own strategies, we need the knowledge of the survivors and partners for our efforts to be relevant and effective.

What really matters is what happens in-country. At the end of the day, the extent to which victims and survivors have access to the assistance and services they are entitled to and need, should be our metric of success.

We need to be clear about what mine action actors can do, and what must be done by others. Assisting victims and survivors is a very different issue from many of the other obligations of the Conventions. There is still a need to unpack what exactly the role of the mine action community should be in meeting the needs of victims, including survivors and indirect victims.

Norway will continue to support victim assistance through our mine action partners, and make sure reports have disaggregated data on the inclusion of people with disabilities, as well as gender and diversity.

Thank you.