



Geneva and Phnom Penh 17 July 2023

To: **All Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva and those at the UN Headquarters in New York without Representation in Geneva and Diplomatic Missions in Cambodia**

All Mine Action Centres and/or Mine Action Authorities around the globe

All relevant international and non-governmental organisations

Excellencies, Esteemed Colleagues,

Further to the [announcement made in April](#) by the Ambassadors of Cambodia and the European Union Delegation in Geneva and the Implementation Support Unit of the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, it is our pleasure to **invite your State / organisation to attend the Third Global Conference on the Rights of Survivors of Anti-Personnel Mines and Other Explosive Ordnance in a Disability Rights Context which will take place at the Conference Venue of the Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra in Cambodia, from 17 to 19 October 2023.**


The Convention's preamble records the wish of the States Parties "to do their utmost in providing assistance for the care and rehabilitation, including the social and economic reintegration of mine victims." This has been translated into the legal obligation and human rights-based approach known as *victim assistance* (VA). This concept first appeared in 1997 in the text of Convention and has since served as the basis for how other international disarmament instruments address this obligation.

The Global Conference will be held with the understanding that the efforts to guarantee the rights and meet the needs of survivors and other victims of anti-personnel mines and other explosive ordnance must be integrated into broader national policies, plans, and legal frameworks including under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and those made to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Global Conference will be an opportunity to

Think. Learn. Empower. Inspire.

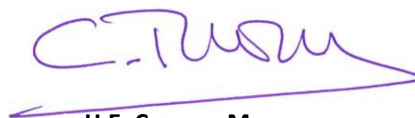
As the States Parties may put a new action plan for consideration of the 2024 Fifth Review Conference (the Siem Reap Review Conference), outputs from the Global Conference could feed into the victim assistance section of such plan. Thanks to support provided by a global Action sponsored by the Council of the European Union to support implementation of the Convention, a limited number of full sponsorships will be awarded to guarantee representation of state and civil society organisations including those from mine-affected communities. Full details follow.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to present your State/organisation the assurance of our highest consideration and look forward to welcoming you in Phnom Penh where together we can take further action to fulfil the Convention's promise to landmine victims and survivors. 



H.E. Ly Thuch
President Designate
Siem Reap Review Conference

Senior Minister & First Vice President
Cambodian Mine Action
and Victim Assistance Authority



H.E. Carmen Moreno
Ambassador

Head of Delegation
Delegation of the European Union
to Cambodia



Juan Carlos Ruan
Director
AP Mine Ban Convention
Implementation Support Unit

Background and questions most often asked

Victim assistance in the framework of the Convention aims to provide assistance for “the care and rehabilitation, including the social and economic reintegration of mine victims”, in particular by recognising the rights and needs of landmine survivors, affected families and communities. In realising this obligation, the Convention’s States Parties have agreed to ensure the full, equal, and effective participation of mine victims in society, based on respect for human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination.

The States Parties have recognised that in order to be effective and sustainable, victim assistance should be integrated into broader national policies, plans, and legal frameworks related to the rights of persons with disabilities under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRCPD), and to health, education, employment, development, and poverty reduction in support of the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

States Parties with victims in areas under their jurisdiction or control have agreed to endeavour to do their utmost to provide appropriate, affordable, and accessible services to mine victims, on an equal basis with others including through victim assistance *actions* contained in the Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024.



It is anticipated that at the 2024 Fifth Review Conference (Siem Reap Review Conference), the international community will adopt a new action plan to guide implementation efforts including on victim assistance. Therefore, the VA Global Conference will be the ideal stage for States Parties, especially those directly concerned by VA matters, to provide informed and inclusive feedback to enhance the VA provisions of a new plan.

The Global Conference however, will be more than just a hands-on meeting for VA experts. It will be an opportunity to bring global attention to the need for better implementation of victim assistance, an obligation which must continue to be fulfilled beyond mine clearance completion.

During the Global Conference, VA and disability rights experts from more than 40 countries representing states (including through their mine action structures) and international and non-governmental organisations will be able to meet with representatives of mine-affected communities and survivor organisations to **Think, Learn, Empower**, and feel **Inspired** for action. Important consideration should be given by all delegations to gender and persons with disabilities’ representation in their nomination.

Guidance for participating and requesting sponsorship

- **Who is invited to participate?** Representatives from States (Parties and not party) to the AP Mine Ban Convention and relevant organisations including those representing survivors and/or mine-affected communities.
- **Who should states nominate to participate?**
 - Leading focal person who routinely engages with matters related to victim assistance or disability rights in states with survivors of anti-personnel mines or other explosive ordnance; or,
 - expert on victim assistance planning, coordination, reporting and/or monitoring; or,
 - expert on disability rights/health, social inclusion including CRPD implementation; or,
 - in absence of such expert, a key person from a mine action structure; and,
 - in the case of non-affected states, a person whose work relates to the implementation of the Convention including the fostering of cooperation and assistance.

The nominee should be able to contribute to expert discussions and panels and follow up on conference outcomes.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Which organisations are being invited?</u> Leading UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and other organisations and campaigns representing the rights of persons with disabilities and mine survivors, academia, and researchers from around the world.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Who is eligible for sponsorship?</u> States with survivors of anti-personnel mines or other explosive ordnance that would otherwise not be able to participate may submit one nomination. A few non-governmental organisations <u>will be invited</u> to nominate one sponsored participant. A handful of presenters may be sponsored to participate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What does the sponsorship include?</u> Upon successful vetting, sponsored delegates will travel on the most direct route in an economy class ticket, receive a modest per diem for meals not covered during the conference, and be provided with accommodation at the same hotel where the meeting will take place. Neither additional compensation nor arrangements such as upgrade travel or lodging in different quarters can be arranged under the sponsorship. The sponsored delegate must accept the conditions of the sponsorship prior to beginning travel arrangements. Teams from the ISU and CMAA will liaise with the delegates and provide support prior to, during, and upon departing the conference. By accepting the sponsorship, delegates agree <u>to attend the entirety of the conference</u> and actively participate including by contributing to panels upon invitation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>How many persons can register per delegation?</u> Unless otherwise noted and due to constraints in space and associated costs, a maximum of three persons can attend per delegation. Sponsorship however, may be granted to only one person in the delegation. Sponsorship is subject to approval.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>How to register?</u> Registration will be a two-step process. First, a Note Verbale listing the name(s) of the official representative(s), title or official status, and email address(es) should be sent to the ISU. A link will then be provided to the delegates to register online. The online registration will begin in August.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>When/where should Notes Verbales be sent?</u> From receipt of this letter and until 1 September if it includes request for sponsorship or until 15 September if no sponsorship is requested. Notes Verbales should be sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ isu(at)apminebanconvention.org as follows, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit c/o EU Council project team

We encourage your State / organisation to act promptly to identify and nominate participants. A draft programme and further logistical information will soon be published on the Convention's website.

<https://www.apminebanconvention.org/en/resources/eu-project/third-va-global-conf/>

Simultaneous interpretation to/from Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, as well as international sign language will be provided during the conference. In addition, thanks to the CMAA, interpretation to/from Khmer will be provided.

Should you have any question or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact the ISU at [isu\(at\)apminebanconvention.org](mailto:isu(at)apminebanconvention.org).

We look forward to seeing your State/organisation represented at this important event seeking to support worldwide efforts to fulfil the Convention's promise to landmine victims and survivors.