



## **THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

**Fifth Review Conference (5RC) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the  
Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on  
Their Destruction**

**Siem Reap, Cambodia from 25 to 29 November 2024.**

### **Statement**

**Agenda item 8. Review of the operation and status of the Convention**

**(d) Assisting the victims**

**Ministry of the Interior  
Civil Protection Directorate**

**NOVEMBER 2024**

**Mr. President, Excellences', Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,**

**The Republic of Croatia aligns itself with the EU statements and continues to express strong support towards the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in all its aspects, especially in line within undertaken obligations in providing assistance to Victims of mines and other explosive ordnances.**

**Important achievements and positive trends in assisting the victims in the period since the Fourth Review Conference confirms our commitment in fulfilling the obligations and goals of the Convention, ensuring the full, equal, and effective participation of mine and other explosive ordnance victims in society based on respect for human rights, gender equality, equity, ensuring different needs, inclusion, and non-discrimination. Victim assistance in the Republic of Croatia is integrated into broader national policies, plans, budgets, and legal frameworks relating to the rights of persons with disabilities but we have strived in recent years to elevate all of the noted support to be in line with ones suggested in the Oslo Action Plan as well as in The Siem Reap – Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029 which we fully support in regards to the Actions 30 to 39.**

**Please allow me to emphasize just a several important key achievements that have been accomplished since the November 2019 and the 4<sup>th</sup> RC:**

- In July 2021 a new Law on Civilian Victims of the Homeland War was officially adopted by the Croatian Parliament. The new Law enables the application for the status of a war-disabled civilian, based on a disability caused by a disease correlating with the Homeland War, due among other things, to disabilities caused by the anti-personnel mines, which elevated the rights and opportunities of direct and indirect civilian victims of mines and other explosive ordnances. This new Law was directed towards about 1,800 civilian victims and 145 family members of deceased civilians enabling them increased rights for, an example, increased personal disability allowance, allowance for assistive care, orthopedic supplements, compensation for the cost of adaptation of a personal car, professional rehabilitation, family disability allowance and other.**

- **After more than 20 years, a revision of the original Mine Victim database was performed within the Swiss-Croatian Cooperation programme. Full-scale national field survey was finalized at the beginning of 2021 with a goal of enumeration of direct and indirect mine victims along with assessment of their needs and quality of life. Result was the establishment of a comprehensive victim database, gathering, among other elements, the information about different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages. We can conclude that this field survey was completed with a very good response rate reaching more than 80% of the available households which is extraordinary accounting the fact that the Homeland war ended some 25 years ago. The collected data concerned the social status, psycho-physical health, education, etc., and became an integral part of the comprehensive victim database, creating the new analysis base value that will serve in future VA activities. Further supportive activities continued in 2022 with the development and implementation of specific VA programs for psychosocial empowerment including counselling and educational activities, and an initiative to improve the social status of direct and indirect victims featuring specific workshops and trainings that continued in 2023, along with an activity of small scale investment opportunities to victims, aimed at increasing their economic welfare and employment capacities, where financial resources were allocated towards the Mine Victims for the start of new and expansion of existing entrepreneurships. Finally, an extensive thematic brochure has been published and distributed to all available victims, which contains complete and updated list of all the rights and opportunities available to victims in the Republic of Croatia and the manner how to exercise them.**

**Unfortunately, even with comprehensively organized risk education activities in the Republic of Croatia, in the period since the Fourth Review Conference there were five (5) accounted mine accidents recording twelve (12) victims with unfortunately four (4) deaths. Majority of victims were civilians, while three (3) deminers were also harmed, resulting with one female and one male deminer deaths.**

**This clearly displays the harsh reality of using the landmines which cause death and suffering in Croatia even though emplaced more than 25 years ago, highlighting the importance of continuous explosive ordnance risk education activities long after the explosive ordnance contamination was established but even after, taking into account possible residual contamination risk events.**

**In conclusion, the Republic of Croatia will continue with its comprehensive efforts to improve national activities in the mentioned field, and, in the same time, is available to share its knowledge and experience in the relevant Mine Action pillar.**

**Thank you, Mr. President.**