

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the Republic of El Salvador and its National Institute of Veterans and Ex-Combatants (INABVE), I would like to extend warm greetings to all the attendees of this important event.

INABVE is the national entity responsible for providing assistance to victims of anti-personnel mines and others affected by damages from the civil war that ended in 1992.

For the past 33 years, El Salvador has endured the social and economic consequences of that conflict. The path to peacebuilding has been long, and we acknowledge that it has required extensive efforts in providing assistance to those who have suffered firsthand from these consequences.

The Institute understands that a multifaceted and collaborative approach is essential. This involves constant communication with various government institutions, such as Health, Defense, Agriculture, Education, and Finance. Many of these institutions are represented on our board of directors, alongside representatives from non-governmental organizations representing victims.

At present, INABVE implements programs for victim assistance in eight key areas: pensions, education, healthcare, credit access, land and housing, productive insertion, orthotics and prosthetics, and funeral expenses. All these programs are legally supported by a special law named "Special Law to Regulate the Benefits and Social Allowances of Military Veterans of the Armed Forces and Ex-Combatants", which regulates social benefits for all war victims. This law ensures that the benefits are financed by the state's general budget, allowing for continuity and sustainability of assistance.

Among our achievements last year was the opening of the first clinic owned and managed by the Institute. Its mission is to provide physical and mental rehabilitation to victims. The clinic is staffed with physicians, physical therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, prosthesis technicians, and dentists.

Recently, we have identified a new challenge: our victims are aging, with many over 60 years old. This presents more complex needs for their assistance. To enhance our support, we are working on the concept of establishing a hospital dedicated to the care of all victims of the civil war, with a focus on developing and strengthening geriatric care.

El Salvador remains committed to assisting victims of anti-personnel mines by integrating various sectors of Salvadoran society through governmental collaboration. We strive to ensure protection for 3,700 victims of anti-personnel mines, 16,500 disabled individuals due to the civil war, and over 125,000 veterans and ex-combatants.

For our country, it is essential to continue fostering international cooperation and implementing comprehensive strategies to advance victim assistance, particularly in line with the actions outlined in the Siem Reap Action Plan.

We hope that our experience gained over the years in victim assistance in El Salvador can serve as a role model for all members of this convention. We are open to cooperating in any areas needed.

Thank you very much for your attention.