

ICBL Statement on Victim Assistance

Delivered by Dejan Ivanovic, landmine survivor and leader of AAA-Serbia, on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)

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Thank you, Mr. President,

I am pleased to speak here on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. I am a landmine survivor, a disability rights advocate, and a veteran working for peace. I lead a survivor network in Serbia. I also work with young persons with disabilities, using sport to support inclusion. And I work with other veterans from the former Yugoslavia to build reconciliation after the horrors of conflict.

Today, I want to speak about the urgent need to strengthen victim assistance.

Landmine survivors, our families, and affected communities still face many barriers—to health care, education, employment, and inclusion. Some support exists, but it is not enough. Few survivors are part of the decisions that affect our lives.

I think everyone here knows this. So how do we change it?

States Parties must make victim assistance sustainable, accessible, and based on the rights of survivors. This includes medical care, physical rehabilitation, and mental health services. It also means support for education, work, and full participation in society.

Victim assistance is a legal obligation under this treaty.

We all are concerned that one major donor outside the treaty is cutting support to dozens of countries, and some States Parties are also reducing their commitment to human security. But this is also a chance for others—including affected states—to step forward and show leadership.

Victim assistance is not charity.

We call on all States Parties to recommit to their promises under Article 6.3 and SRAP. These obligations are now part of other treaties and international standards. Affected states should review and improve their victim assistance plans, use realistic approaches, integrate the CRPD and the VA IMAS, and report on what is working.

Some big changes are happening in the humanitarian system.

Donor states should fund survivor-led projects. States must also include survivors in the planning, delivery, and monitoring of assistance. This is key for effective and meaningful support.

In this time of crisis, it is not enough to make all the points in three minutes and hope for meaningful change. We call on you to understand what is at stake. Find our full statement online and read Landmine Monitor reporting. Talk with survivors, victim assistance focal points, and civil society partners to make a real change. Thank you.