

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

SERBIA

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – VICTIM ASSISTANCE

COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Austria, Burkina Faso (Chair), the Netherlands, and Sri Lanka)
Intersessional Meetings
17-20 June 2025

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Serbia of updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACTIONS:

Ensure that a relevant government entity in affected States Parties is assigned as the focal point to coordinate victim assistance and oversee and enhance the integration of victim assistance activities into broader national policies, plans, budgets, and legal frameworks (Actions 30, 1 and 2)

2. Serbia reported that the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (MOLEVS) through its departments for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and veterans-disabled protection are responsible for integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks.

Develop a national specific, measurable, realistic, and time-bound disability action plan (Actions 30 and 3)

3. Serbia reported on implementation of a Strategy for Improving the Position of Persons with Disability 2020-2024 and its 2022-2024 Action Plan in line with the national Law on the rights of veterans, disabled veterans and civilians with disabilities.
4. Serbia reported that in January 2025 the Government adopted the new Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Persons with disabilities for the period of 2025-2030 along with its Action Plan for the year 2025 to 2027.
5. *The Committee would welcome further information on integration of victim assistance in the 2025-2030 Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Persons with disabilities and its operational plan.*

Include mine and other explosive ordnance victims or their representative organisations, in victim assistance planning and implementation at the national and local level (Actions 30, 31 and 39)

6. *The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.*

Report on progress and challenges in implementing their national action plans (Action 30)

7. Serbia reported on progress such as the adoption a new strategy and a new action plan.

Carry out inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine and other explosive ordnance victims are effectively addressed (Action 31)

8. Serbia reported on that in December 2024 the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) signed a cooperation agreement with the MOLEVS to enhance collaboration in relation to victim assistance implementation in the framework of national laws.

9. The Committee would welcome further information on inter-ministerial or inter-sectoral coordination efforts in Serbia.

Identify all mine and other explosive ordnance victims and collect accurate and comprehensive information on their needs, challenges and geographic locations in a manner disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other considerations (Action 32 and Action 9)

10. Serbia reported having registered 516 civilian mine survivors and 205 civilian mine victims (family members of person that have been killed), showing a decrease to 630 mine victims survivors and 214 indirect civilian victims reported in previous years, as some of the survivors and indirect victims have been passed away.

11. The Committee would welcome information disaggregated by age, gender and disability of mine and other EO victims.

Integrate the data on mine and other explosive ordnance victims into a national centralised database, such as disability data systems (Actions 32 and 9)

12. Serbia reported that data on mine and other EO victims are centralised into a database owned by the MOLEVS. Serbia reported that financial support is sought to either create a new or improve the existing database.

Provide effective and efficient context-specific emergency medical care to new casualties and improve national capacity through training, including on psychosocial first care, specialized training for health professionals and layperson first responder training in affected communities (Action 33)

13. Serbia reported no casualties in 2024.

Ensure that mine and other explosive ordnance survivors have access to health services including in rural and remote areas (Action 33)

14. Serbia reported that in accordance with the Law, civilian war victims are entitled to a various types of benefits including orthopaedic allowance, medical care and financial compensation related to medical care, spa centre recovery, professional rehabilitation and financial assistance during professional rehabilitation, and that the government seeks to improve the provision and delivery of these and other services.

Ensure that a national/sub-administrative area referral mechanism is in place to facilitate access to services (Action 34)

15. The Committee recalls that in 2024 Serbia reported on the existence of a referral mechanism between rehabilitation services and the MOLEVS.

Create and disseminate a comprehensive directory of services available, accessible, and inclusive for all mine and other explosive ordnance victims (Action 34)

16. The Committee would welcome information in this regard.

Efforts to increase the availability and accessibility of rehabilitation services (Action 35)

17. Serbia reported on provision rehabilitation services as well as “spa climatic recovery”, a special service that bring together survivors for a certain period, where they are provided with accommodation, full health care examination followed by necessary treatment and therapy including natural healings, with the aim to improve overall health and wellbeing of survivors.
18. Serbia reported that as a result of cooperation between SMAC and the MOLEVS mine and other EO survivors provide with rehabilitation and healthcare through a project funded by the Republic of Korea and implemented by the ITF. Serbia reported that this project will continue through 2025.

Ensure to provide assistive technology (Action 35)

19. The Committee would welcome information on availability of assistive technology.

Increase resources and national capacity to make assistive technology affordable and accessible (Action 35)

20. The Committee would welcome information on efforts to increase national resources and capacity to make assistive technology affordable and accessible.

Ensure mine victims have access to psychological and psychosocial support services including to mental health (Action 36)

21. Serbia reported on availability of psychosocial support including by holding workshops and educational programmes and other efforts by non-government organisations, financed by the Government.

Efforts to make peer-to-peer support availability including by integrating it into public healthcare and other relevant systems (Action 36)

22. The Committee would welcome information on efforts made to provide peer-to-peer support and integrate it into healthcare system.

Meet the social and economic inclusion needs of mine victims (Action 37)

23. Serbia reported that according to the national law on the rights of civilian mine victims (war invalids) mine and other EO victims have the right to personal disability benefits, care allowance and free and preferential driving, in addition to having the right to other specialised and mainstream services.
24. Serbia reported that MOLEVS provided 687,000 euros to NGOs, who implemented 182 projects to provide socio-economic and psychosocial services to persons with disabilities and others in need.

Remove barriers to social and economic inclusion of mine survivors and affected families (Action 37)

25. Serbia reported that efforts are made to improve services including in rural areas by strengthening local authorities are able to meet the needs and provide services including social protection and employment.
26. **The number of mine and other explosive ordnance survivors and affected families accessing social and economic services (Action 37)**

27. The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.

Ensure the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risk (Action 38)

28. The Committee recalls that in 2024 Serbia reported that the MOLEVS implemented several programmes to raise awareness and to inform persons with disabilities about the epidemiological situation, health protection and the vaccination process, including the following efforts:

- Within the Strategy for Improving the Position of Persons with Disabilities in Serbia for the period from 2020 to 2024, the importance of ensuring the safety and protection of persons with disabilities is recognised.
- The Department for Emergency Situations within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission in Belgrade, prepared the Family Manual for Behaviour in Emergency Situations, which was developed in cooperation with national organizations of persons with disabilities. Posters for dealing with emergency situations for primary schools adapted for persons with disabilities were created.
- The Law on Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management was adopted in cooperation with representatives of national organizations of persons with disabilities and in accordance with the recommendations of the SENDAI Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. This represents a positive move, but it is necessary to create and implement systemic measures and ensure that the services of emergency interventions and assistance in emergency situations are accessible and available to all persons with disabilities, applying all standards of accessibility and principles of universal design.
- Six workshops and round tables were organized, where conclusions were adopted aimed at: recognition of persons with disabilities in assessments and risk reduction plans and protection and rescue plans, regulations and strategic documents.

Increase inclusion of and access by mine victims into programmes for humanitarian assistance, risk reduction, and conflict preparedness and protection (Action 38)

29. The Committee recalls that in its previous reports, Serbia reported persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are included in relevant policy and programmes of the MOLVES and that the Ministry of Culture and Information and Ministry of Sports carry out targeted activities to enhance participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the country.

Improve accessibility and strive to remove physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal, and communications barriers (Actions 39 and 37)

30. Serbia reported carrying out activities such as raising awareness at intersectoral level; improved measures for gender equality and anti-discrimination, social protection services in rural and remote areas with the aim of increasing the quality of services provided.

Include survivors and/or their representative organisations in matters that affect them, including in planning and implementation at the national and community levels (Actions 39, 38 and 30)

31. In 2024, Serbia reported persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are included in relevant policy and programmes of the MOLVES and that the Ministry of Culture and

Information and Ministry of Sports carry out targeted activities to enhance participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the country.

32. The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.

CROSS - CUTTING ACTIONS:

Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, partnership and coordination (Action 1)

33. Serbia reported on progress in policy development such as the adoption of a new strategy and an action plan and provision of tangible services to mine and other EO victims, demonstrating national ownership in assisting mine and other EO victims.

Ensure that gender, age, disability considerations, and the diverse needs and experiences of people in mine-affected communities including mine survivors, are considered (Action 5)

34. Serbia reported that efforts have been made to improve gender equality with the aim to improve services.

Allocating national financial commitments for victim assistance implementation (Action 40)

35. Serbia reported on allocation of 687,000 euros to local NGOs to provide various types of services to mine and other EO victims, among other people they assist.

Having a resource mobilisation plan (for victim assistance) in place (Action 41)

36. The Committee would welcome information in this regard.

SRAAP country reporting tracker							
Victim Assistance							
Serbia							
Actions	Indicators	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Additional information or clarification requested by the Committee
30	% of affected States Parties that report on the relevant government entity assigned as the focal point to oversee and enhance the integration of victim assistance into broader national policies, plans, budgets, and legal frameworks to ensure its sustainability, including following Article 5 completion;						
	% of affected States Parties that report having an inclusive national action plan in place considering mine and other explosive ordnance victims, gender, age, disability, and other considerations and containing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound objectives;						The Committee would welcome further information on integration of victim assistance in the 2025-2030 Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Persons with disabilities and its operational plan.
	% of affected States Parties that report including mine and other explosive ordnance victims or their representative organisations, in victim assistance planning and implementation at the national and local level;						The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.
	% of affected States Parties that report on progress and challenges in implementing their national action plans.						
31	% of affected States Parties that report having in place an interministerial and multi-sectoral coordination mechanism to ensure that the needs and rights of mine and other explosive ordnance victims are addressed;						The Committee would welcome further information on inter-ministerial or inter-sectoral coordination efforts in Serbia.
	% of affected States Parties that report including the needs and rights of mine and other explosive ordnance victims in relevant national policies, legal frameworks, and budgets.						
32	% of affected States Parties that report on efforts to identify mine and other explosive ordnance victims and disaggregate victim data by gender, age, disability, and other considerations;						The Committee would welcome information disaggregated by age, gender and disability of mine and other EO victims.
	% of affected States Parties that report the inclusion of data on mine and other explosive ordnance victims in a national centralised database such as disability data systems and make data available to relevant stakeholders in accordance with data protection regulations/measures.						
33	% of affected States Parties that report having a mechanism in place to ensure an efficient and effective emergency response to new casualties;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on availability and accessibility of health services, including in rural and remote areas.						
34	% of affected States Parties that report having a national/sub-administrative referral mechanism in place which is available, accessible, and inclusive for all mine victims;						
	% of affected States Parties that report having a comprehensive directory of services available, accessible, and inclusive for all mine victims.						The Committee would welcome information in this regard.
35	% of affected States Parties that report on efforts to increase the availability and accessibility of rehabilitation services;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on the provision of assistive technology;						The Committee would welcome information on availability of assistive technology.
	% of States Parties that report on efforts to increase resources and national capacity to make assistive technology affordable and accessible.						The Committee would welcome information on efforts to increase national resources and capacity to make assistive technology affordable and accessible.

36	% of affected States Parties that report on mine and other explosive ordnance survivors and affected families accessing mental health and psychological support disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other relevant factors;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on the provision of and integrating peer-to-peer support into public healthcare and other relevant systems.						The Committee would welcome information on efforts made to provide peer-to-peer support and integrate it into healthcare system.
37	% of affected States Parties that report on efforts to remove barriers to the social and economic inclusion of mine survivors and affected families;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on programmes for inclusive employment, livelihoods, and other social protection services;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on the number of mine and other explosive ordnance survivors and affected families accessing social and economic services, disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other relevant factors.						The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.
38	% of affected States Parties that report integrating the safety and protection of mine survivors in their emergency/humanitarian response and preparedness plans;						
	% of affected States Parties that report on mine victims' inclusion and accessibility to programmes for humanitarian assistance, risk reduction, and conflict preparedness and protection.						
39	% of affected States Parties that report on progress in removing physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal, and communication barriers;						
	% of affected States Parties that report including survivors and/or their representative organisations in matters that affect them, including in planning and implementation at the national and community levels.						The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS							
1	% of affected States Parties that report integrating Convention implementation activities into: national development plans and budgets, strategies and budgets including on poverty reduction, humanitarian response, on health and mental health, gender equality inclusion of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, Human Rights, climate change adaptation plans, environmental protection and improvement, and/or disaster risk reduction						
	% of affected States Parties that report having strengthened partnerships and coordinated Convention implementation activities with relevant humanitarian, peacebuilding, climate, environmental, development, health, disability, and human rights sectors						
5	% of affected States Parties that report national work plans and strategies integrating gender, age, disability considerations, and the diverse needs and experiences of people in mine-affected communities including mine survivors;						
	% of affected States Parties that report national work plans and strategies developed through inclusive consultation with stakeholders including survivors and representatives of mine-affected communities						
	of mine victims and survivor organisations participating in Convention meetings						
40	% of affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to their implementation of victim assistance.						
	% of States Parties that report on exploring all sources of funding, including conventional and alternative/innovative						
41	% of affected States Parties that report on progress, challenges in implementation, and requirements for assistance.						
	% of affected States Parties that report having a resource mobilisation plan in place.						
	% of affected States Parties that have taken advantage of the Individualised Approach.						The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.