



Geneva and El Salvador, 16 March 2026

To: Permanent Missions of States Parties from the Americas and the Caribbean to the UN in Geneva
To: Relevant International and Non-Governmental Organisations

Excellencies, Esteemed Colleagues,

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of El Salvador to the UN in Geneva, the Delegation of the European Union to the UN in Geneva, and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, hereby have the pleasure to invite your State to attend the **Regional Stakeholder Dialogue in the Americas: Advancing Victim Assistance and Ensuring Sustainable Capacities under Article 5** to take place the first week of May in San Salvador, El Salvador.

The Regional Stakeholder Dialogue will serve as opportunity to measure progress in implementation of the commitments related to the assistance of mine victims and the need to maintain sustainable capacities to address previously-unknown or newly-contaminated mined areas.

The Regional Stakeholder Dialogue will be hosted by the Veterans and Ex-Combatants Benefits Administration Institute (INABVE, in Spanish) and held with the support provided by a global project sponsored by the Council of the European Union (EU) to support implementation of the Convention and the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029. For this purpose, a limited number of sponsorships will be provided for one or two State officials to attend. Kindly find the background information for your consideration. A formal programme and other information will be forthcoming. In order to advance the necessary logistics, we request that your State sends confirmation of participation and if necessary, a request for sponsorship by 31 March, isu@apminebanconvention.org. Select organizations will be invited to submit requests for sponsorship.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to present you with the assurance of our highest consideration and look forward to welcoming you in San Salvador where together we can take further action to fulfil the Convention's promise to mine-affected communities and survivors.



H.E. Rina Yessenia Lozano Gallegos
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

Committee on Victim Assistance
Permanent Mission of El Salvador to UN Geneva



H.E. Deike Potzel
Ambassador, Head of Delegation

Delegation of the European Union
to the UN Geneva



Juan Carlos Ruan
Director

AP Mine Ban Convention
Implementation Support Unit



Regional Stakeholder Dialogue in the Americas: Advancing Victim Assistance and Ensuring Sustainable Capacities under Article 5

First Week of May 2026, San Salvador, El Salvador

* Draft Information to be updated

Background

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 aspiration 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 disarmament instruments address this obligation. States Parties have agreed to ensure the full, equal, and effective participation of victims in society, based on respect for human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination.

The Parties have also recognised that 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 (CRPD), and national systems for health, education, employment, development, and poverty reduction in support of the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This approach seeks to ensure that VA remains sustainable even beyond fulfillment of obligations under Article 5 (mine clearance).

Action 2 of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029 (SRAAP) calls on States Parties to "Establish sustainable national capacities able to coordinate, regulate, and manage the national mine action programme including survey, clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance, and undertake post completion activities in the event that previously unknown mined areas including newly mined areas are discovered." Its indicators measure the "Percentage of affected States Parties reporting having sustainable national capacities in place..."

Therefore, the Regional Stakeholder Dialogue (RSD) presents an opportunity for States Parties in the Americas to provide updates on the fulfilment of these actions in a more informal setting. The RSD is to take place in the space of three days (to be confirmed). This would include two days discussion on victim assistance and one day for discussions and sharing of experiences on sustainable national mine clearance capacities to address residual contamination. A field visit for one half-day is also planned. A draft programme and further logistical information will soon be published on the Convention's website:

<https://www.apminebanconvention.org/en/resources/eu-project/>

Type of Participants

All States Parties in the Americas and the Caribbean are invited to attend – as all have a role to play in implementing the Convention. Nevertheless, States Parties that have reported on victim assistance efforts, have expressed obligations under Article 5, or have declared completion of their Article 5 obligations are particularly encouraged to attend. These include,

- El Salvador, Chile, Colombia, Nicaragua, and Peru which consistently report on victim assistance;
- Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Suriname, and Venezuela which declared completion of Article 5 obligations;
- El Salvador, which completed clearance operations prior to joining the Convention;
- Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru which are carrying out activities under Article 5;
- Argentina which has reported areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced.

In addition, relevant international and non-governmental organisations are invited to attend. These include those working on,

- assistance to or advocacy for victims of anti-personnel mines or other explosive remnants of war or gun violence;
- disability rights, inclusion, health, and development;
- mine clearance operators or organisations working on explosive ordnance / mine risk education.

Sponsorship Available

Thanks to funds provided by the Council of the European Union, the States Parties listed above may request sponsorship for up to two officials to participate. Sponsorship includes Economy air travel, accommodation, and meals. One person should have responsibility for matters related to victim assistance or in its absence, for CRPD implementation. Director from a national mine action centre or in its absence, someone with responsibility for matters related to sustainable capacities to address (new or previously unknown) contamination. A third nomination in either of these two areas may be submitted but will be subject to availability. A small number of representatives from organisations representing the rights of survivors or of persons with disabilities or affected communities, will be contacted directly to nominate one participant for sponsorship.

For your preparation and nomination of potential attendees, kindly note below the topics in the agenda. State nominees should be prepared to actively participate including in group work and provide presentations related to the following,

Victim Assistance

1. Progress and challenges on victim assistance and SRAAP Actions 30-39 implementation:
 - a. National Implementation measures, including matters related to national VA coordination (focal point, national plans, centralised database). Sustainability strategies: applying integrated approaches to embed victim assistance into broader national systems;
 - b. Providing access to services, including to rehabilitation; assistive technology, healthcare, mental health and psychological support, and social and economic inclusion;
2. Synergies with other international frameworks, namely the CRPD, and initiatives including regional ones;
3. Fostering participation of and cooperation with organisations representing mine affected communities, survivors, and/or persons with disabilities;
4. Reporting on victim assistance.

Matters Related to Addressing Residual Contamination

5. Persons with responsibilities for ensuring or planning the establishment of sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas and/or newly mined areas discovered following completion of Article 5 (mine clearance);
6. Type of response and capacity if discovering previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas, including after deadlines have passed;
7. Engagement with communities that may be at risk of encountering residual contamination, including mine risk education;
8. Annual reporting.

The Regional Stakeholder Dialogue will be held in English, Spanish, and sign language (interpretation is provided).