



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(28 November – 1 December 2016)

Statement on Victim Assistance

Santiago, 29 November 2016

Mr. President,^{1 2}

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, known as the IACG-MA, comprising the United Nations entities³ involved in mine action.

The United Nations is pleased to communicate, for the first time in this setting, that its updated Policy on Victim Assistance in Mine Action has been adopted and released. The updated Policy takes into account the robust normative environment, particularly the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and emphasizes the integration of victim assistance in mine action. The updated policy is accordingly guided by Objective 2 of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018, and reflects the commitment of the United Nations to enhance its contribution to victim assistance.

Of the 29 State Parties that have reported landmine victims, several⁴ have requested the support of the United Nations for victim assistance. According to data

¹ Heraldo Muñoz, Foreign Minister of Chile.

² Members of Committee on Victim Assistance: Thailand (Chair), Belgium, Colombia and Senegal.

³ The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) / United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) (Chair), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (Observer), and the World Bank (Observer).

⁴ Albania, Cambodia, Colombia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur) and Tajikistan



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collected through the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism, established to assess the implementation of the United Nations Strategy on Mine Action, mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERWs) disproportionately impact civilians, in particular men and boys. To be more precise, in countries and territories participating in the fourth round of data collection, civilians constitute 72 per cent of reported mine/ERW casualties; men represent 56 per cent of reported casualties of mines and ERWs; boys comprise an additional 28 per cent.

Each victim faces unique challenges and circumstances, and the support offered by the United Nations is varied and context-specific. Data collected through the M&E mechanism has helped the United Nations measure progress towards targeted and effective support to national authorities for improved victim assistance. Encouragingly, 59 per cent of countries participating in the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism have a national disability policy framework or strategy that provides for victims and survivors of mines and other explosive remnants of war.

In Sudan, for example, UNMAS is assisting the government in developing a National Victim Assistance Strategic Framework and Multi-year Work Plan for implementation in 2017, aiming at the provision of direct assistance to survivors to enhance their reintegration into local communities. In Myanmar, UNICEF similarly supported the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Rehabilitation, which has for example led to the setting up of a technical working group and the launching of a Victim Assistance Center in Kayin State last May. The Center assists persons with disabilities, including landmine victims, to access basic social services such as psychosocial support, devices to aid mobility, referral to rehabilitation services, and promotes social representation and the rights of landmine victims. In Albania, Azerbaijan, Lebanon and Yemen, UNDP has also supported national governments and implementing partners to



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enhance economic integration for landmine survivors through production centres and vocational training.

Furthermore, UNDP assisted the Government of Tajikistan to mainstream victim assistance activities into the national disability programme providing support through national and international institutions to landmine survivors as part of the wider population of persons with disabilities.

While welcoming the report of the Committee, the United Nations notes with disappointment that, of the 29 States Parties which have reported significant numbers of landmine survivors, 14 have failed to submit their obligatory Article 7 reports. The Committee on Victim Assistance requires such data to produce a comprehensive report. Thus, the United Nations calls upon all States Parties to fulfil their Article 7 obligations.

To conclude, the United Nations strongly encourages those States Parties that face challenges in the delivery of services to anti-personnel mine victims, to request support from the United Nations and other relevant actors.

Thank you.