



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Statement on Victim Assistance

Geneva, 22 June 2015

Delivered by Mr. Bruno Donat, Chief, Geneva Office, UNMAS

Mr. President,

The following statement is delivered on behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA)¹, comprising 14 United Nations entities involved in mine action.

The United Nations should like to thank the coordinators, Australia and Mexico, for their work on this section of the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

Over one third of United Nations mine action programmes are engaged in the delivery or support of victim assistance services. These programmes most frequently provide livelihoods and social inclusion services, and they work to complement national efforts and ensure access of victims to a broad range of services.²

The CCM provides the most advanced language for victim assistance among all mine action-related treaties. The definition of cluster munitions victims in Article 1 and the comprehensive provisions in Article 5 were an important source of inspiration for the updating of the United Nations Policy of Victim Assistance in Mine Action. We hope to be able to share with you, this updated policy on Victim Assistance before we meet again in Dubrovnik.

The international community, including the United Nations, has nevertheless acknowledged that victim assistance will continue to face practical and financial challenges.

The United Nations encourages affected States with cluster munitions victims to assist them and States Parties to fulfill their obligations under Article 5. If States identify challenges in delivery, they should request support from the United Nations and other relevant actors. The United Nations will address such requests consistent with the forthcoming updated United Nations Policy on Victim Assistance in Mine Action and Objective 2 of “The Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018,” which states

¹ 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).

² Data and analysis from the Mechanism for Monitoring and Evaluation for “The Strategy of the United Nations for Mine Action 2013-2018.”



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that “Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and ERW victims within broader responses to injury and disability”.

The understanding of what victim assistance means to survivors, what their needs are, and most importantly what their human rights are, has improved. Linking victim assistance to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has made a significant contribution in this domain. Where a better common understanding is still needed, is in identifying clearer ways to address the needs and rights of victims of mine and ERW incidents other than survivors, in particular their families, the families of those killed and the affected-communities. The latter point ought to be addressed further in the section on victim assistance in the final text of the Dubrovnik Action Plan.

The United Nations takes this opportunity to also recall that in this forum last year, UNICEF issued the “Guidance on Child-focused Victim Assistance”.

Thank you.