



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

Ninth Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons **Statement on Victim Assistance**

Geneva, 9-10 November 2015

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

Mr. Coordinator¹,

The United Nations welcomes the exchanges of information on victim assistance updates and challenges as included in your report. The active discussions on victim assistance in the context of Protocol V, as well as your recommendations, reflect the continued relevance of this mine action pillar.

The United Nations considers that what really matters is not which weapon caused the injury, but that the needs of the victims, especially survivors, are properly addressed in a timely manner.

The draft resolution on Assistance in Mine Action adopted by the General Assembly's Fourth Committee on 16 October makes various references to victim assistance. The resolution urges States to provide humanitarian assistance for victims of mines and explosive remnants of war, and to take measures to spare the civilian population that are consistent with the principles of international humanitarian law. It also encourages States to support victims' access to appropriate medical care, physical and sensory rehabilitation, psychosocial support, education and skills training and income-earning opportunities and to provide those services to all, regardless of gender, age or socioeconomic status.

From a more programmatic angle, the resolution encourages States, and relevant organizations involved in mine action, to continue efforts to ensure mine action programmes take into account the specific needs of victims and to provide capacity-building assistance to affected countries in order to integrate victim assistance into broader national frameworks.

The United Nations takes very seriously the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on assistance in mine action and actively supports victims from mines, explosive remnants of war and other explosive hazards as part of mine action programming.

Also, the United Nations is leading the process of updating its victim assistance policy of 2003. Since then, the normative framework for addressing victim assistance has significantly changed. This update is being conducted in response to the commitment made by the IACG-MA in the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. It aims to ensure greater coherence, effectiveness and impact of the work of the United Nations in

¹ Coordinator: Argentina, Friend of the Coordinator: Chile



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

support of victims of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). The updated Policy has now reached the final stages of endorsement at the Principals level of the IACG-MA.

Thank you.