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United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
19th Meeting of the States Parties
(15 – 19 November 2021)

10. Consideration of the general status and operation of the Convention

**(a) Assisting the victims: Conclusions and recommendations related to the mandate
of the Committee on Victim Assistance**

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

Mr. President,¹

This statement is made on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA).²

Excellencies,

It is crucial to our collective commitment to end the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines and to assist those whose lives have been altered by explosive ordnance. Victim Assistance is a key pillar of mine action, and it is the only pillar that can have a direct impact on answering this need. While the prevention of accidents is preferable to the treatment of casualties, many victims will need support before the goal of a mine-free world is reached.

An important milestone for funding was reached just last year, in 2020, when Victim Assistance was added as an activity that can be funded under the revised life-saving criteria of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). In 2021, the Mine Action Area of Responsibility, in collaboration with other Areas of Responsibility under the Global Protection Cluster, provided indicators to standardize the way the CERF measures success in Victim Assistance project proposals. A refined list of these indicators will be developed in 2022.

¹ H.E. Robbert Jan Gabriëlse, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, and Disarmament Ambassador at-large.

² The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action consists of twelve United Nations Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes: the United Nations Mine Action Service of the Department of Peace Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the World Bank are observers.



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Mr. President,

An important milestone has just been reached on standardization. Last month, the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action endorsed an International Mine Action standard on Victim Assistance: IMAS 13.10. This IMAS 13.10 highlights the importance of multisector engagement, information management, referral pathways, advocacy, resource mobilization and the strengthening of national capacities. The United Nations encourages all stakeholders to make use of this new standard.

Excellencies,

Victim Assistance is also increasingly integrated in Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). In 2021, this has already been the case for more than 20 Victim Assistance projects, including 13 in Syria. These projects have targeted over 380,000 persons, including some 290,000 in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

Out of the several examples which illustrate the impact of Victim Assistance, please allow me to mention just three:

First, in Eastern **Ukraine**, through UNICEF support, 66 adult mine survivors and 106 child mine/ERW victims have received case management and other protective services since 2018. More than 70 families have received medical services including physical rehabilitation and more than 120 psychological counselling sessions have been provided.

Second, In **Viet Nam**, the Korea International Cooperation Agency and UNDP are supporting the Government in a large mine action project, which started in 2018. As part of the Victim Assistance component, UNDP has worked with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) on survivor tracking and a case management system. Survivors have been engaged in the development of the system itself. It empowers survivors to update their information online and to print certificates which allow access to government assistance for disability. In 2019, the system was used for the first large scale assessment of persons with disabilities. 75,000 persons with disabilities, including explosive ordnance survivors, registered. New mobile applications will further improve accessibility to the system and in 2021 a nation-wide assessment of persons with disabilities was announced.

Third, in Northeastern **Nigeria**, UNMAS is assisting victims of explosive ordnance, integrating identification and victim data collection, mapping of specialized and non-specialized services, and the establishment of referral pathways in close coordination with protection, health and livelihoods actors. Organizations of persons with disabilities are associated with the project's



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activities. The project also allows the field testing of a set of tools for data collection and reporting on access to services, including self-reporting on assistance received by persons of concern.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Please allow me to conclude: The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention has made a meaningful difference in eradicating the threat and impact of mines since its entry into force. The United Nations encourages all States to implement the Oslo Action Plan – nine actions of which are dedicated to Victim Assistance. The United Nations will continue to support States to achieve their commitments.

Thank you.

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