



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

First Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Statement on Victim Assistance

Dubrovnik, 9 September 2015

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

Madam 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.

Over one third of United Nations mine action programmes support the delivery of victim assistance services. These programmes most frequently provide gender and age sensitive assistance, including healthcare, rehabilitation, psychosocial support, livelihoods and social inclusion services. Assistance by the United Nations is set 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 treaties addressing the impact caused by both the use of conventional weapons and consequences of explosive remnants of war. The definition of cluster munition victims in Article 1 and the comprehensive provisions in Article 5 have been an important source of inspiration for the updating of the United Nations Policy of Victim Assistance in Mine Action. We hope to share with you soon the updated United Nations policy on victim assistance.

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 munition victims to fulfill their obligations under Article 5 as required in accordance with applicable international humanitarian law and human rights law. If States identify challenges in the delivery of services, 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 that “Comprehensive support is provided by national and international actors to mine and ERW victims within broader responses to injury and disability”.

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.”



United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action

First Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Additionally, the United Nations takes this opportunity to also recall that UNICEF has issued the “Assistance to Victims of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War: Guidance on Child-focused Victim Assistance”.³

Madam President, to close:

The understanding of what adequate assistance means for victims, based on their needs, and most importantly on their rights, has improved. Linking victim assistance to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) embodies a rights-based approach to victim assistance in the framework of the CCM. Further work is still needed in identifying and considering the needs and rights of victims of mine and ERW incidents other than survivors, in particular children, women and young people, as rightly addressed in the draft Dubrovnik Action Plan, within Action 4.1.

Thank you.

³ <http://www.mineaction.org/resources/guidance-child-focused-victim-assistance-unicef>