

**CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS
INTERSESSIONAL MEETING
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 15-18 APRIL 2013**



**SUMMARY of the SESSIONS on VICTIM ASSISTANCE
and on COOPERATION & ASSISTANCE
(including mentions of civil society)**

Victim Assistance

Afghanistan and **Bosnia & Herzegovina** chaired the session as Co-Coordinator of the working group on victim assistance.

Albania announced that Austrian funding will support an assessment of the medical and socio-economic needs of survivors in six regions, and that recommendations will be shared during a national workshop in November 2013. It reiterated that its National Victim Action Plan is in line with the CCM, Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) and Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). **Croatia** explained it has not yet been able to review its National Action Plan for Mine and UXO Victims 2010-2014. It highlighted that survivors' organizations have been included in the preparation of national reports under the CCM, MBT and Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), and said that these organizations continued to provide socio-economic assistance.

Lao PDR reported four people injured by cluster munitions and two killed since the beginning of 2013. It outlined the latest steps taken to set up a Survivors Tracking System through which more than 15,000 survivors should be tracked by the end of 2013 in the ten most affected provinces, in order to inform victim assistance provision. It noted that its draft victim assistance plan and disability law were still pending completion and approval. **Lebanon** reported on the impact of decreasing funding for victim assistance activities and expressed hope that a survey of survivors' needs could be conducted by the end of 2013 with support from Austria and Korea. It also spoke about efforts made to provide disability cards to eligible victims and to further implement the National Disability Law.

Australia pointed out that over 20% of its 100 million AUD mine action strategy had been attributed to victim assistance initiatives. It explained that it supports dedicated victim assistance and disability initiatives while also seeking to mainstream disability-inclusive development throughout its aid program. **Austria** noted that victim assistance often doesn't require the development of new fields, but calls for existing health and social services as well as legislative and policy frameworks to adequately respond to the needs of citizens, including survivors of cluster munitions, their families and communities. **Austria** and **Mexico** stressed that all States Parties have an obligation to provide cooperation and assistance in order to assist victims. **Norway** said the obligation to provide victim assistance was a fundamental part of the CCM, but that the Convention alone "could not deliver the full realization of victims' rights." **Australia, Austria** and **Norway** recommended to better harness the expertise and the political influence of other fora on human rights, health, disarmament and development in order to advance victim assistance, while **Mexico** supported synergies with the MBT, CCW and CRPD.

The **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** noted that the CRPD was an important guiding framework, and emphasized that community-based and participatory approaches as well as close partnership with civil society were proven ways to have a positive impact on the lives of survivors. It referred to the victim assistance component of the UN Mine Action Strategy 2013-2018 and announced that the 2003 UN Policy on Victim Assistance was under review.

Moaffak Al-Khafaji delivered the **CMC** statement, calling for greater inclusion of survivors in decision-making processes and in the development, implementation and monitoring of assistance programs. He urged states to develop victim assistance plans if they have not yet done so, and to take immediate steps to improve access to services.

Statements on victim assistance are available at <http://bit.ly/XWOXaN>

Cooperation and Assistance

In their opening remarks, **Mexico** and **Sweden** who chaired the session as Co-Coordinator of the working group recalled that cooperation entails financial resources but also the sharing of skills, expertise, experience, lessons learned and technical knowledge.

Afghanistan outlined the scale of its remaining contamination and called for financial assistance from the international community, explaining that details of the clearance plan were available as needed. **Albania**, a country formerly contaminated with landmines and cluster munition remnants, argued that victim assistance is still needed once all contamination has been cleared and reiterated its request for international support. It also noted that it is still clearing explosive remnants of war. **Grenada**, which has declared compliance with Article 4 at the 3MSP, reported that Norwegian People's Aid had trained local personnel in explosive remnants disposal in order to address any residual contamination.

Lao PDR pointed out that cooperation and assistance not only supports implementation but also helps to promote universalization of the CCM. It reported having received 22,852,669 USD of external funding in 2012, and that the Lao government had contributed 600,000 USD. Lao PDR also said its clearance sector could absorb 50 million USD per year, and thanked donors who contribute un-earmarked, multi-year funding. **Lebanon** reported a shortage of 21,133,623 USD in 2012 for the implementation of its strategy on clearance, victim assistance and risk education. It estimated the 2012 contribution by the Lebanese government at around 8.25 million USD. Lebanon also outlined its contribution to cooperation between affected states in the Middle-East and North of Africa. **Peru** asked for technical support on stockpile destruction.

Australia said it had exhausted and exceeded its 100 million AUD commitment to mine action for the period 2010-2014, and that it was considering the development of a mine action strategy for the period post-2014 while still supporting mine action initiatives in the interim. It presented two studies of the Mine Action Support Group: one on donor coordination and the other on completion of clearance obligations. **Germany** said it supported mine action in 28 countries and that 1.6 million Euros had been provided for victim assistance in 2012, an equivalent if 10% of Germany's annual contribution to mine action. **Japan** reported the allocation of 57.6 million USD to mine action during fiscal year 2012, Lao PDR being the largest recipient with 15 million USD. Japan outlined its triangular cooperation scheme involving Cambodia and Lao PDR, and noted that south-south cooperation is effective, cost-efficient and increases the motivation of all partners involved.

Mexico spoke about the possibility of creating a virtual platform to match needs and offers of support. **The Netherlands** reiterated that it would contribute 45 million Euros to mine action for the period 2012-2016, and invited donor states to consider multi-year funding. **New Zealand** reported a "longstanding" annual contribution of 2.5 million NZD to the ICRC and of 1 million to UNMAS, as well as other contribution to individual states. **Spain** referred to the catalogue of best practices it published with Mexico on 2012, and noted its contribution of 7.3 million Euros to the mine action sector. **Sweden** reported giving 95 million Swedish Kronor to the mine action sector in 2012. **Switzerland** emphasized that frank exchanges between donors and affected states "on what works and what should be improved" were "essential if we intend to act in as an effective manner as possible." It said that "fund and forget" was not an option and that reporting

and assessments were particularly important. The **United Kingdom** referred to its contribution of 41 million GBP to mine action for the period 2010-2013, aimed at complementing other development activities, fostering national ownership and responding to new emergency needs. Both **Australia** and **Switzerland** outlined some of their criteria for funding mine action.

The **UN Inter-Agency Cooperation Group on Mine Action** introduced its Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018, and announced that it is examining ways to further assist countries in reaching completion of clearance and stockpile destruction. It expressed the view that with concerted action and focused attention, many states should be able to complete clearance within the next five years. It noted the decline in dedicated funding for victim assistance and called for more research on the impact that bilateral funding to the public health and social welfare sectors has on the provision of victim assistance.

Branislav Kapetanovic spoke on behalf of the **CMC**. He highlighted positive trends such as increased use of multi-year funding mechanisms and emerging non-financial cooperation. He emphasized that while the CMC understands the need to increasingly integrate victim assistance funding into broader programs, donors should in the short term ensure that such programs can adequately reach cluster munition survivors, especially those living in remote areas.

Statements on cooperation and assistance are available at <http://bit.ly/17mHmFl>

Mentions of the CMC or civil society throughout the Intersessional Meeting

Ghana and **Portugal** as Co-Coordiators of the working group on universalization, as well as **Lao PDR**, **Lebanon**, **Senegal** and the **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** thanked the CMC for its efforts to universalize the Convention.

Croatia and **Spain** as Co-Coordiators of the working group on stockpile destruction and retention noted the distinctive character of relations between civil society and States Parties in the context of the CCM.

The **Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining** referred to the contribution of the Monitor and the ICBL-CMC in the review of the International Mine Action Standards on land release.

The **UN Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action** highlighted the good collaboration with civil society in the area of cooperation and assistance, and recalled that the Oslo Progress Report noted the importance of civil society's contribution to victim assistance.

Burkina Faso and **Ghana** thanked the CMC for its support with the elaboration their national implementation measures. **New Zealand** as Coordinator of the thematic area on national implementation measures thanked the CMC for its contribution.

Belgium as Coordinator of the thematic area of transparency measures welcomed civil society's advice on transparency issues.

Many affected states also referred to support received from non-governmental clearance operators and from non-governmental organizations providing assistance to victims.