



ICRC

Eighteen Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Geneva, 16-20 November 2020

International Committee of the Red Cross Statement on Victim Assistance

This year marks the first year of the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan which contains new commitments of States Parties to victim assistance, building on the existing efforts in this regard over the past years. The ICRC commends the work done by the Committee on Victim Assistance to enhance the understanding and promote the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan, in particular by organizing discussions on the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and humanitarian emergencies, and by developing a checklist for States Parties to assess and report on progress in victim assistance.

At the close of the Fourth Review Conference, 30 States Parties had reported significant numbers of mine victims under their jurisdiction or control. The ICRC welcomes that States Parties reemphasized their commitment in the Oslo Action Plan to ensuring “the full, equal and effective participation of mine victims in society, based on respect for human rights, gender equality, inclusion and non-discrimination”. The ICRC also wishes to stress the importance of integrating victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks related to the rights of persons with disabilities, and to health, education, employment, development and poverty reduction in support of the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

While commending the efforts made by most of these States Parties to improve the quality and quantity of health and physical rehabilitation programs for survivors, we note that many struggle to address fully the recognized needs and gaps in victim assistance. Through the Oslo Action Plan, States Parties with mine victims committed to provide appropriate, affordable and accessible services to mine victims, on an equal basis with other persons with disabilities. In this respect, the ICRC continues to assist all persons with physical disabilities, including victims of mines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war through its Physical Rehabilitation Programme, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year. In particular, it helped reduce the barriers to obtaining appropriate care by helping develop national capacities and by directly providing people with physical rehabilitation services. In 2019, more than 414,800 people with physical disabilities benefited from 223 projects, such as physical rehabilitation centres, component factories and training institutions, supported by the ICRC. The ICRC is also strengthening its efforts to facilitate the reintegration of persons with disabilities into their communities through other means – for example, by helping them gain or regain access to education, undertake livelihood activities and participate in sports. In addition, the ICRC Movability Foundation, which was integrated into the Physical Rehabilitation Programme as of January 2020, supported a total of 32 projects in 14 countries. These projects included support to government- and privately run physical rehabilitation centres, and institutions that trained physical rehabilitation professionals. This contributed to the provision of services to 39,160 people with physical disabilities, and of material support to 22,436 beneficiaries.

To conclude, let us underscore that despite all these and other efforts, much more needs to be done to ensure that the lifelong needs of mine victims, survivors and their families have been fulfilled. This requires sustained mobilization of resources and political will from States Parties with mine survivors and those in a position to provide assistance, as well as the Convention community as a whole. The ICRC stands ready to continue supporting States Parties to fully implement their obligations towards mine victims.

Thank you.