



Panel Discussion

Safety and Protection of Mine Survivors in Situations of Risks and Humanitarian Emergencies

1 July 2020, 15:00 – 16:00 CET

**Organizers: The Committee Victim Assistance
(Chile, Italy, Sweden, Thailand)**

Background

Since the adoption of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention the number of casualties caused by anti-personnel mines has steadily decreased in most affected States. In spite of this, recent figures have seen a sharp rise in casualties in some States and each year thousands of people continue to fall victim to mines, in most cases acquiring severe impairments such as loss of limbs. Mine survivors often require continued support following their accident and, as persons with disabilities, are among the most vulnerable population in situations of humanitarian emergencies and other risks caused by conflicts and natural disasters. Like it was alerted by the World Health Organization (WHO), the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic besides other ongoing situations of risks and emergencies such as protracted conflicts, tsunamis, landslides, floods, hurricanes, storms, earthquake and etc. serves as a reminder of the preventable disproportionate sufferings they cause to vulnerable members of our society, such as mine survivors or persons with disabilities.

At the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, States Parties, reaffirming their recognition of the need to integrate victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks adopted the Oslo Action Plan that contains several strong commitments related to Victim Assistance. To address the challenge of ensuring the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risk, the States Parties committed in the Oslo Action Plan to:

“Ensure that relevant national humanitarian response and preparedness plans provide for the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, in line with relevant international humanitarian and human rights law and international guidelines.” (Action #40)

This commitment by the States Parties under the Oslo Action Plan necessarily calls for synergies with other international frameworks and commitments that address the protection and safety of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in situations of risk including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international human rights and humanitarian frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and UN Security Council resolution 2475.

Objectives

The objective of the panel is to increase understandings on the significance of the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risk and emergencies and to offer expert recommendations on how they can be achieved over the next five years. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the panel will also aim to draw attention on potential disproportionate impact of the pandemic on mine survivors and to keep abreast of good practices in this regard in order to reduce risks and consequences on lives and livelihoods of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

This panel is one of the sessions of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's Intersessional Meetings and will be convened virtually. During this one-hour panel, experts will examine international frameworks for the safety and protection of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, in situations of risk and humanitarian emergency and explore best practices in mitigation, preparedness and response. They will also discuss the complementarity and intersections between victim assistance and disability rights and highlight the advantages of applying an integrated approach to achieve the objectives of Action #40.

Format

Brief 7 - 8 minutes presentations, Q&A session

The panel will be held in an interactive format, beginning with introductory remarks by the presenters which will lay the ground for a question and answer session.

Participants are invited to forward questions or comments in advance to: isu@apminebanconvention.org (please reference the name of the panel in your email) by **25 June**.

Panel

Moderator: **Tancredi Francese**, Counsellor, Deputy-Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament

- **Oscar Javier Siza Moreno**, Office of Social Promotion, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Colombia
- **Moaffak Al Khafaji**, Iraqi Alliance of Disability Organizations (IADO), a member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)
- **Maria Soledad Cisternas**, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility
- **Marc Zlot**, Physical Rehabilitation Program Coordinator, International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Sophie Allin**, Technical Unit Coordinator, Handicap International (HI) Iraq