

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

CROATIA

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – VICTIM ASSISTANCE

COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Italy, Slovenia, Uganda (Chair) and Zambia)

Intersessional Meetings

19-21 June 2023

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Croatia of updated information on its victim assistance activities.
2. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

Mine casualties

3. Croatia reported 1 new casualty in 2022, a significant reduction from 7 casualties reported for 2021. Croatia reported a total of 607 casualties registered between 1996 and the end of 2022.
4. The Committee would welcome disaggregated information by age, gender and disability of the 606 mine victims, and information on indirect victims, such as affected families.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACTIONS:

Strengthen partnerships and integrate victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Actions #1, #6 and #33)

5. Croatia reported that victim assistance is integrated into relevant national laws, policies and programmes. The Committee recalls that Croatia also reported that in July 2021 the Croatian Parliament adopted a new “Law on Civilian Victims of the Homeland War”, and it provides the same legal security to civilian victims as is already provided to the Croatian War Veterans, and among others, to explosive ordnance (EO) survivors and affected families.
6. Croatia reported that relevant State administration authorities are involved in addressing challenges in victim assistance, including medical rehabilitation, socio-economic empowerment and other areas.
7. The Committee would welcome further information on the designated government entity that oversees the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, and their implementation.

Develop and implement measurable, realistic and time-bound national action plan (Actions #2 and #33)

8. The Committee would welcome information on plans / strategy in place to guide victim assistance efforts and/or its integration into broader frameworks.

Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)

9. The Committee recalls that Croatia reported that the Law on Civilian Victims of the Homeland War ensures equal access to services and aims to improve socioeconomic status of victims.
10. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made regarding the removal of physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal or communication barriers that may exist and limit mine victims' access to services.

Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)

11. The Committee recalls that in 2021 Croatia reported that the Ministry of Interior planned to further pursue creation of a Coordination Body in accordance with the Act on Mine Action and composed of representatives of the ministries for home affairs, health and war veterans, Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, Croatian Institute of Public Health and other relevant stakeholders.
12. The Committee would welcome Croatia providing an update on progress made in activating the Coordination Body in 2022.

Establish or strengthen a centralised database / national information management system (Actions #9 and #35)

13. Croatia reported completing a national field survey and has established a comprehensive EO database, gathering information on needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages. Croatia reported that the field survey was completed with a good response rate of 82.6% of the available households (data was gathered from 423 EO victims and 473 EO closest family members.)
14. Croatia reported that the collected data concerned the social status, psycho-physical health, education, etc., and became an integral part of the comprehensive mine victim database that supports future activities.
15. The Committee would welcome information on how data is shared with the relevant ministries as well as information on the existence of a centralised national database that integrates data related to mine victims.

Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)

16. Croatia reported on the availability of public health care structures that includes clinics, clinical centres, specialised polyclinics, hospitals and rehabilitation centres, and everyone involved in the incidents are entitled to health protection and rehabilitation.

Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)

17. Croatia included a brochure in its report which includes a list of contacts of relevant ministries, agencies and service providers and the brochure is made available online.
18. The Committee would welcome information on the existence of or plans to develop a national referral mechanism to ensure mine victims' access to services.

Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy (Action #38)

19. Croatia reported availability of rehabilitation services and the availability of insurance to assist victims in accessing assistive devices and indicated that mine victims are entitled to health protection and acquisition of assistive technology “to the amount covered by the Croatian Health Insurance Institute”, in accordance with relevant national laws, rules and regulations in place.

20. Croatia reported that relevant state administration authorities are involved in addressing challenges faced by mine victims relating to their access to medical rehabilitation, socio-economic empowerment and other services.

21. The Committee would welcome information on any efforts to include rehabilitation into health systems.

Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)

22. Croatia reported that in 2022, nine psychosocial support workshops were held and benefited 39 victims. The Committee recalls that in previous years, Croatia reported on the availability of psychosocial interdisciplinary centres in all twenty-one counties of the country, including four regional centres for psychological and psychotherapeutic services.

23. The Committee would welcome additional information on these efforts as well as on availability of peer-to-peer support, and its inclusion into health systems.

Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)

24. Croatia reported that relevant national authorities are active in meeting the socio-economic needs of mine victims. The Committee recalls that in 2022 Croatia reported on the adoption of the Law on the Civilian Victims of the Homeland War to improve the socio-economic situation of mine victims.

25. Croatia reported that in 2022, four Training, Counselling and Employability Workshops and 12 specific trainings were conducted with participation of 36 victims. Croatia reported that this project will continue in 2023 and will provide small scale investment opportunities to victims to increase their economic welfare and employment capacities.

Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)

26. The Committee would welcome information on progress made or plans to strengthen measures for the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies including natural disasters.

Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Actions #4 and #41)

27. The Committee would welcome information on progress made on inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in relevant policies and programmes including Convention related events.

CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS:

Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including [...] by making financial and other commitments to implementation (Action #1)

28. Croatia reported that by adopting the new Law on Civilian Victims of the Homeland War in 2021, Croatia showed its strong determination to improve an inclusive environment in favour of victims.

29. The Committee would welcome additional information on allocation of national financial commitments for implementation of victim assistance activities.

Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered (Action #3)

30. Croatia reported that the field survey that was carried out in cooperation with Switzerland, considered the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men as well as their age.

Challenges in implementation of Victim assistance Commitments (Action #8)

31. The Committee would welcome information on challenges encountered in victim assistance in Croatia and information on how the international community including the Committee on Victim Assistance can assist Croatia to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.

The Oslo Action Plan country reporting tracker
Victim Assistance
Croatia

Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information request by the Committee
#33	# States Parties that have designated a government entity to coordinate victim assistance activities						The Committee would welcome further information on the designated government entity that oversees the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, and their implementation.
	# States Parties that have national action plans in place containing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound objectives and related indicators						The Committee would welcome information on plans in action plan / strategy in place to guide victim assistance efforts and/or its integration into broader frameworks. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made regarding the removal of physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal or communication barriers that may exist and limit mine victims' access to services.
#34	# States Parties that report that they include mine victims in relevant national policy and support frameworks						The Committee welcomes Croatia to provide an update on progress made in activating the Coordination Body in 2022.
#35	# States Parties that include victims of anti-personnel mines in disability data systems						The Committee would welcome information on how data is shared with the relevant ministries as well as information on the existence of a centralised national database that integrates data related to mine victims.
	# States Parties that disaggregate victim data by gender, age and disability						
#36	# States Parties reporting on efforts to ensure an efficient and effective emergency response to mine accidents						
#37	# States Parties that report having a national referral mechanism						The Committee would welcome information on availability of a national referral mechanism.
	# States Parties that report having a directory of services in place						
#38	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability and accessibility of comprehensive rehabilitation services						The Committee would welcome information on integration of rehabilitation into health systems.
	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability of psychological and psychosocial support services						
#38	# States Parties that have established peer-to-peer services within their national healthcare system						The Committee would welcome information on availability of peer-to-peer support, and its inclusion into health systems.

#39	# States Parties reporting on efforts to remove barriers to the social and economic inclusion of mine victims						
#40	# States Parties that report integrating protection of mine survivors in their humanitarian response and preparedness plans						The Committee welcomes Croatia to share information on measures in place to ensure the safety and protection of mine victims in stations of risks and emergencies.
#41	# States Parties that report that they include victim representatives or their organizations in victim assistance planning at the national and local level						The Committee would welcome information on progress made on inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in relevant policies and programmes including Convention related events.
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS							
#1	# States Parties that report, having included Convention implementation activities in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, where appropriate						
	% mine-affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention						The Committee would welcome additional information on allocation of national financial commitments for implementation of victim assistance activities.
#3	# mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place						The Committee would welcome information on the three-implementation plan and efforts to ensure resources for its implementation.
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings						
#8	# States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting						
	# States Parties that report on progress and challenges during formal and informal meetings						The Committee would welcome information on challenges encountered in victim assistance in Croatia and information on how the international community including the Committee on Victim Assistance can assist Croatia to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.