

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

SERBIA

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 Serbia of updated information on its victim assistance activities.
2. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

Mine casualties

3. Serbia reported no new mine casualties in 2022. Serbia has a total of 630 mine and explosive remnants of war survivors registered, including 214 affected family members.
4. The Committee would welcome further information on gender, age and disability of the mine victims. The Committee would also welcome a clarification on the number of victims as Serbia had previously reported a total of 1,123 survivors.

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. Serbia reported that the department for protection of persons with disabilities and the department for veterans-disabled protection under the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (MOLEVS) oversee the integration of victim assistance into broader national frameworks.

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

6. Serbia reported on implementation of a Strategy for Improving the Position of Persons with Disability 2020-2024, in line with the national Law on the rights of veterans, disabled veterans and civilians with disabilities.
7. Serbia reported that an Action Plan for the period of 2021-2022 was developed to enforce the Strategy and relevant stakeholders took part in its implementation and reported to the Council for Persons with Disabilities through the MOLEVS.
8. Serbia reported that in December 2022 and January 2023, MOLEVS conducted consultations to develop an Action Plan for 2023-2024, to ensure the implementation of the Strategy.

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

9. Serbia reported that it strives to achieve goals through the implementation of national policies, plans and legal frameworks that will tangibly contribute to the full, equal and effective participation of EO victims in society.
10. Serbia reported that the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities is based on principles of human rights, dignity of persons with disabilities, inclusion and equal opportunities in all spheres of life.
11. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made to lift any barriers that may hinder participation and inclusion of mine victims in Serbia.

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)

12. Serbia reported strengthening intersectoral coordination, including to facilitate efforts between representative associations of explosive ordnance (EO) victims and the government agencies.

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

13. Serbia reported that the MOLEVS has a database where information on beneficiaries, including those of mine victims, has been registered. Serbia also reported that the database would need to be updated, for which financial resources are required.

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

14. Serbia reported in accordance with the Law, war victims civilians are entitled to a series of benefits including orthopaedic allowance, medical care and financial compensation related to medical care, spa centre recovery, professional rehabilitation and financial assistance during professional rehabilitation, and that the government seeks to improve the provision and delivery of these and other services.

Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)

15. Serbia reported on the existence of a referral mechanism between rehabilitation services and the MOLEVS.

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

16. Serbia reported on the availability of rehabilitation services including “spa climatic recovery” which includes accommodation, healthcare services and other therapies to improve the wellbeing of mine survivors and other veterans.
17. Serbia reported that in 2022 MOLEVS began a project in cooperation with the Serbian Mine Action Centre to transfer mine survivors in need of physical rehabilitation and assistive devices to Slovenia for advanced assistive devices, with financial assistance provided by the Government of Korea through the ITF. Serbia reported that the project will continue to benefit mine survivors.
18. The Committee would welcome further information on availability and provision of rehabilitation services, such as physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy to mine victims in

affected communities, including in rural areas, as well as information on progresses made in this regard in 2022.

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

19. Serbia reported that MOLEVS provided financial assistance to local non-governmental organisations who provided psychological rehabilitation, among other services to persons with disabilities and others in need.

20. The Committee would welcome information on progress made in the provision of psychosocial support to mine victims in 2022. The Committee would also welcome information on availability of peer-to-peer support and efforts undertaken in this regard in 2022.

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

21. Serbia reported that MOLEVS cooperated with 216 local non-governmental organisations who provided socio-economic rehabilitation services, among other services, to persons with disabilities and others in need.

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

22. The Committee would welcome information on measures in place to ensure the safety and protection of mine victims in situations of emergencies.

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

23. The Committee would welcome information on progress achieved with regards to inclusion and participation of mine survivors, and their representative organisations.

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

24. Serbia reported undertaking activities in respective policy, coordination and programmes to improve assistance to mine victims and other persons with disabilities. Serbia also reported allocating national fundings to programmes that benefit mine victims.

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

25. The Committee would welcome information on efforts made to ensure consideration of the perspective of women, girls, boys and men in implementation.

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

26. The Committee would welcome information on challenges encountered in victim assistance implementation in Serbia and information on how the international community including the Committee can assist Serbia to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.

The Oslo Action Plan country reporting tracker
Victim Assistance
Serbia

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 progress made to lift any barriers that may hinder participation and inclusion of mine victims in Serbia.
	# States Parties that have national action plans in place containing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound objectives and related indicators						
#34	# States Parties that report that they include mine victims in relevant national policy and support frameworks						
#35	# States Parties that include victims of anti-personnel mines in disability data systems						The Committee would welcome further information on gender, age and disability of the mine victims. The Committee would also welcome a clarification on adjustment of the number of victims “1,123” previously reported.
	# 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 the existence of a national directory of services for stakeholders to facilitate referral of mine victims to relevant services.
	# 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 further information on availability and provision of rehabilitation services, such as physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy to mine victims in affected communities, including in rural areas, as well as information on progresses made in this regard in 2022.
	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability of psychological and psychosocial support services						The Committee would welcome information on progress made in provision of psychosocial support to mine victims in 2022.
	# States Parties that have established peer-to-peer services within their national healthcare system						The Committee would also welcome information on availability of peer-to-peer support and efforts undertaken in this regard in 2022.
#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 would welcome information on measures in place to ensure the safety and protection of mine victims in situations of 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 progresses achieved with regards to inclusion and participation of mine survivors, and their representative organisations.
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						
#3	# mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place						
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings						The Committee would welcome information on progress made in ensuring gender equality and diversity in provision of victim assistance.
#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 Serbia and information on how the international community including the Committee can assist Serbia to fulfil its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.