

Committee on Victim Assistance

Dear participants. Thailand is honoured to lead the work of the Committee on Victim Assistance with our colleagues from Algeria, Ecuador, and Sweden.

Purpose of Committee

The purpose of the Victim Assistance Committee is to support your national victim assistance efforts and to continue our discussion on victim assistance within the Convention and to take discussions on VA to other forums.

Mandate of Committee

In this regard the Committee is mandated to, amongst others, support States Parties in fulfilling their Oslo Action Plan commitments and drawing observations on implementation and to make the needs of States Parties known.

We thank many of you which we have already had a chance to interact with in the last weeks through bilateral meetings. These interactions are very appreciated by the Committee and we look forward to continuing our discussions.

OAP Actions

As with the Implementation of Article 5 , the Oslo Action Plan adopted a number of Actions and related indicators on Victim Assistance that need to be reported on including on efforts to:

- Designate an agency to take the lead on efforts to integrate victim assistance into broader national frameworks and developing, monitoring, and reporting on the implementation of national plan;
- Application of multi-sectoral efforts and alignment victim assistance activities with provisions of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The establishment or strengthening of a central database;
- The provision of services including first aid and medical care, rehabilitation, psychological and psychosocial support, including peer to peer support;
- Insuring social and economic inclusion of mine victims including their effective participation and inclusion; and,
- Ensuring protection for survivor in situations of risk including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies, and natural disasters

Again, as explain by my colleague from Zambia, some of these matters may be new in terms of reporting and reporting on the indicators is crucial in order for us to carry out our mandate of assessing implementation of the Victim Assistance commitments of the Oslo Action Plan. In this regard, the Committee on Victim Assistance throughout the years has carried out a number of efforts to support States Parties with their victim assistance reporting.

The designation of an agency to take the lead on efforts to integrate victim assistance into broader national frameworks, to develop an inclusive action plan and to monitor and report on this plan, as indicated in Action 33, is crucial to ensures cohesive reporting on implementation. We are happy to note that many States Parties have

informed us of the assigned focal point. We look forward to receiving information on focal points of all States Parties with victim assistance responsibilities.

Given that Victim Assistance is by its nature a multi-sectoral commitment, information on implementation has a number of different sources including Including government entities, civil society actors, survivors and their representative organizations, the ICRC and UN agencies.

National monitoring and reporting mechanisms established, and reports prepared in the context of the CRPD, may also be useful for obtaining and collating information as well as in measuring and tracking assistance provided to mine survivors.

Gathering and collecting information from different sources is therefore critical for reporting on Victim Assistance.

Thankfully, the principles and understandings that guide efforts to assist victims of landmines, cluster munitions or other ERW are consistent across the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Protocol V to the CCW, and the CCM, and for survivors, in the context of the CRPD. The sources of information on efforts to assist the victims are also mostly the same regardless of whether the State is reporting under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the CCM, Protocol V to the CCW, or the CRPD.

Various themes are comparable across the three instruments such as data collection, plans, policies and legislative frameworks; integration into broader frameworks; non-discrimination; accessibility; access to services (medical care, rehabilitation, psychological support, social and economic inclusion, and social protection); inclusion; coordination, including focal points; monitoring and reporting; cooperation and assistance, including resource mobilisation; and, gender and age-sensitivity.

In this regard national coordination on reporting matters would fundamentally contribute to easing the challenges in reporting.

VA Checklist

I would also like to draw your attention to a practical tool the Committee developed following the adoption of the Oslo Action Plan – a checklist on the nine victim assistance actions of the Oslo Action Plan.

The Checklist can be used by States Parties with victim assistance responsibilities to report and measure the state of progress in victim assistance and to create a baseline on all aspects of victim assistance for the next four years.

By completing this Checklist States Parties and the Committee would be in a better position to gage progress and remaining challenges in victim assistance in run up to the Fifth Review Conference. Last year, several States Parties with victim assistance responsibilities have reported using the checklist and the Committee encourage others to make use of it this year. The Checklist is available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish on the Convention's website. We have also included it in the drop box which we will send to participants following this session.

Baseline

In establishing the baseline at the 18MSP, the Committee drew from information submitted in Article 7 reports by States Parties.

As you can appreciate from the figures in this table, there are several areas in which we would welcome increased information on implementation from States Parties.

As my colleague also mentioned, it is equally important for the Committee to know the challenges you face in achieving the different objectives of the Oslo Action Plan. In reporting on your implementation of these actions the Committee would invite you to please include your challenges and plans to address them. The more specific the information provided in this regards the better.

We continue to be available to support your efforts. As we receive your reports on 30 April, we will begin developing our preliminary observations for the Intersessional meetings and we hope to provide these to you ahead of the meetings.

We also look forward to drawing out particular challenges faced by States implementing Victim Assistance to explore solutions through panel discussions and in conversation with Experts at the Victim Assistance Experts meeting we aim to host on the margins of the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties.

We look forward to your continued engagement.

Thank you.