

**PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS
COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE
(Belgium, Croatia, Ecuador and Mozambique)**

Intersessional Meetings 7-8 June 2018

Observations of the Committee on the information submitted by Croatia

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Croatia of its Article 7 report for the calendar year 2017 containing updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

Mine casualties

2. The Committee observed that Croatia reported no mine accidents and/or related casualties in 2017.

Assessment of needs, the availability and gaps in services (Action #12)

3. The Committee observed that Croatia was acting upon its commitments under Action 12 by reporting on the following aspects of its efforts to assess the needs of mine victims, and to strengthen mechanisms for providing increased assistance to mine victims:
 - a. Continued “advisory support to mine victims and their families” and data collection on mine victims and their needs during the process of the non-technical survey since 2014, in order to establish a “unique Mine Victim Database”, and;
 - b. Efforts to create a Mine Victim Database will be financed through the Swiss-Croatian Cooperation programme and it will be implemented by the "Demining and Socio-economic Integration" project with a goal of establishing functional mine victims’ database to serve as a basis for developing further and strengthening policy actions in support of mine victims.
4. The Committee commends Croatia for reporting on its strategic efforts to collect data on mine victims, and it observed that it would welcome additional information on the status and use of the Mine Victim Database as well as information on the results of data that have been collected concerning mine victims and their needs since 2014, disaggregated by sex- and age.
5. The Committee observed that it would encourage Croatia to report on efforts to assess the availability and gaps in services, on existence and functions of referral mechanisms which facilitate mine victims’ access to services, and would also welcome additional information regarding the advisory supports provided to mine victims and their families, disaggregated by sex- and age.

Time-bound and measurable objectives (Action #13)

6. The Committee observed that Croatia had not reported on time-bound and measurable objectives it seeks to achieve through the implementation of national policies, plans and legal frameworks that will tangibly contribute, to the full, equal and effective participation of mine victims in society and would encourage submission of a time-bound and measurable

plan.

Enhancement in the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, including allocation of budgets for their implementations (Actions #14)

7. The Committee observed that Croatia is acting upon its commitment under Action 14 of the Maputo Action Plan by reporting on the provision of assistance to mine victims through broader health care services and institutions, as follows:
 - a. The country has developed public health care structure that includes clinics, clinical centres, specialized polyclinics, hospitals and rehabilitation centres, and that all victims are entitled to health protection and orthopaedic aids to the amount covered by the Croatian Health Insurance Institute;
 - b. These rights, namely access to health care services, are regulated by a number of laws, rules and regulations, and;
 - c. In accordance with the Law on Mine Action, mine victims assistance was conducted with the coordinating role of the Government Office for Mine Action and in co-operation with CROMAC, relevant ministries and NGOs. Other forms of aid were mainly implemented by non-governmental sector, and funding was secured through donations from international and domestic entities, the reported elaborated.

Increase availability of and accessibility to rehabilitation services, economic inclusion opportunities and social protection measures for all mine victims, regardless of their gender and age (Action #15)

8. The Committee observed that with the exception of efforts ensuring access to health care services by mine victims, Croatia had not reported on specific efforts to increase availability of and accessibility to other appropriate comprehensive services such as economic inclusion opportunities and social protection measures, and would encourage Croatia to provide with information, disaggregated by sex- and age, concerning efforts to increase availability of and access to services..

Strengthen local capacities and enhance coordination (Action #15)

9. The Committee observed that Croatia had not reported on efforts to strengthen local capacities and to enhance coordination with subnational entities in order to improve and facilitate assistance to victims, and would welcome information on this matter.

Inclusion and participation of mine victims (Actions #16)

10. The Committee observed that Croatia had not reported on efforts concerning the inclusion and active participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in national action plans, legal frameworks, policies, implementation mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation, and welcomes information in this regard.

Removing barriers and raising awareness (Actions #15 and #17)

11. The Committee observed that Croatia had not reported on efforts to raise awareness on the needs and rights of mine victims in accordance with Action 17 and as required under Action 15 on efforts to remove physical, social, cultural, economic, political and other barriers,

including expanding quality services in rural and remote areas, and welcomes information on these matters.

Measurable improvements, challenges, and priorities for assistance in advance of the next Review Conference (Action #18)

12. The Committee observed that while Croatia reported on efforts, such as collection of data and plans to create a victims database, it had not reported on identified challenges that remain and priorities for assistance, in advance of the next Review Conference. The Committee observed that would encourage Croatia to report on its plans for identification of remaining challenges, priorities and plans in ahead of the upcoming Review Conference of the Convention.