

**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 Albania

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Albania 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 Albania had provided an update on the number of mine victims indicating a total of at least 1,002 (151 killed and 851 injured) stating an increase of four more persons injured from Albania's previous report. The Committee would welcome information disaggregated by sex- and age in this regard.

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

3. The Committee observed that Albania is acting upon its commitments under Action 12 of the Maputo Action by reporting on the completion of a "Needs Assessment of Social-Economic and Medical needs of marginalized Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) victims in Albania" in 2016. The Committee also noted that the assessment had aimed at reviewing the status of the survivors, identifying their specific needs and that the findings of the assessment were disseminated amongst the relevant actors. The Committee welcomes the data came out of the assessment, disaggregated by sex- and age, in line with action 12.

Time-bound and measurable objectives (Action #13)

4. The Committee observed that Albania reported on having a Victim Assistance Plan aiming to "support the mine and UXO victims throughout Albania" covering all pillars of victim assistance including "emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, socio-economic reintegration, data collection, relevant laws and policies". The Committee observed that it would welcome receiving a copy of the Victim Assistance Plan.

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

5. The Committee observed that Albania had not reported on efforts under Action 14 concerning enhancements that have been made or will be made to disability, health, social welfare, education, employment, development and poverty reduction plans, policies and legal frameworks needed to meet the needs of mine victims, and on budgets allocated for their implementation. The Committee encourages Albania to report on enhancements that have been or will be made to integrate victim assistance into broader frameworks as per Action 14.

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)

6. The Committee observed that Albania is implementing aspects of Action 15 by reporting on efforts in relation to the provision of vocational training to 25 survivors, and maintenance of

Prosthetics Workshops enabling the centres to provide prostheses and orthoses, which resulted to “at least 31 new prostheses and 41 major repairs were provided to amputees in need at the Prosthetic Workshop in Kukës Hospital and at 1481 physiotherapy sessions were offered to 135 patients.” The Committee would welcome additional information, disaggregated by sex- and age, concerning the increase in availability and/or accessibility to economic inclusion opportunities and social protection measures.

Strengthen local capacities and enhance coordination (Action #15)

7. The Committee observed that Albania continues to coordinate its victim assistance programmes with stakeholders, by reporting that “all activities were monitored and coordinated by Albanian Mine and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO) and carried out in cooperation with various implementing partners including the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Kukës Regional Hospital, and Directorates of Public Health, UNDP Albania, International Trust Fund Enhancing Human Security (ITF), University Rehabilitation Institute Republic of Slovenia and the NGO “Albanian Association for Assistance Integration and Development” (ALB-AID).” The Committee noted that it would welcome information on strengthening local capacities related to victim assistance programmes and policies.

Inclusion and participation of mine victims (Actions #16)

8. The Committee observed that Albania had not reported on efforts under Action 16 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.” The Committee welcomes further information related to this matter.

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

9. The Committee observed that as in the previous year, Albania had not reported on its efforts to raise awareness on the needs and rights of mine victims. In this regard, the Committee welcomes further information.

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

10. The Committee noted that Albania intends to increase assistance to Mine/UXO survivors and other persons with disabilities and that it “has already identified for 2018 the financial gaps and needs in order to fulfil obligations under the APMBT, other disarmament conventions and the CRPD.” The Committee, however, observed that as required by the Action 18, Albania has not shared information on its plans to identify remaining challenges and priorities in advance of the next Review Conference and would welcome information in this regard.