

**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 the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by the Democratic Republic of the Congo of its Article 7 report for the period of 2014 to 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 the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported 156 mine casualties, disaggregated by sex and age, including 44 in 2014, 16 in 2015, 36 in 2016, 51 in 2017 and 9 in 2018 in North Kivu, South Kivu, Kasai-Central, Kasai, Upper Lomami, Ituri and Upper Uele provinces, which have increased the total number of registered mine victims in the country to 2,719.

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

3. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported continued efforts to identify and register new mine victims, and would welcome information on the results of the National Strategic Plan developed in 2010 to assist victims, including improving the data collection and systems to analyse data. The Committee would also welcome information on efforts to assess the availability and gaps in mainstream and specialised services, disaggregated by sex and age.

**Time-bound and measurable objectives (Action #13)**

4. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that since the adoption of the Maputo Action Plan, the country had not updated previous plans or developed a new plan of action for the implementation of the Maputo Action Plan, and encourages the Democratic Republic of the Congo to develop a time-bound and measurable plan of action to achieve the objectives outlined under Actions 12 to 18 of the Maputo Action 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 the Democratic Republic of the Congo had not reported on efforts to implement Action 14, and welcomes information on this matter.

**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 the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported on the availability of rehabilitation assistance in collaboration with the ICRC and Heri Kwetu Orthopedic Centres in Bukavu (South Kivu Province), Kalembe-lembe and the Centre for Disability in Kinshasa, Shirika la Umoja in Goma (North Kivu Province), University Clinics of

Kinshasa and Jukay Centre in Kananga (Kasaï-Central), and welcomes additional information, disaggregated by sex- and age, on mine victims that have benefited from these services.

7. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that since 2012 there has been a lack of post-traumatic rehabilitation programmes, psychological support, economic reintegration assistance and social reintegration and would welcome information on current or planned efforts to make such services available to all mine victims.

#### **Strengthen local capacities and enhance coordination (Action #15)**

8. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that the Victim Assistance Coordination Group that was led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and National Solidarity has been inactive as a result of a restructuring of the Ministry in 2016, and that in January 2018, the Congolese Mine Action Centre has activated the coordination group on victim assistance. The Committee would welcome information on efforts to increase local capacities and enhance sub-national coordination of victim assistance efforts.

#### **Inclusion and participation of mine victims (Actions #16)**

9. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that victims' associations have always been involved in all activities that concern them as well as in other activities of the mine action programme, and welcomes additional information on frequency and level of participation of mine victims, including in mine-affected provinces.

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

10. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo had not reported on actions taken to remove physical, behavioural or other types of barriers, expanding quality services in rural and remote areas, or raising awareness on the rights of mine victims, and welcomes any information on these matters.

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

11. The Committee observed that the report outlines a number of challenges such as the absence of a victim assistance action plan since the adoption of the Maputo Action Plan, discontinuation of projects concerning post-traumatic rehabilitation, psychological support, economic and social reintegration, and social reintegration as well as a lack of coordination due to inactiveness of the victim assistance coordination group, which has been re-launched in early 2018.
12. The Committee encourages the Democratic Republic of the Congo to report on measurable improvements made in the well-being and the guarantee of the rights of mine victims, remaining challenges and priorities to achieve the objectives of Actions 12 to 18 of the Maputo Action Plan, ahead of the upcoming Review Conference.