

**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 South Sudan**

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by South Sudan 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 South Sudan reported 25 accidents which have injured 50 and killed eight people in 2017, 13 more casualties than in 2016. These casualties occurred in the states of Western Bahr El Ghazal (4), Upper Nile (5), Northern Bahr El Ghazal (6), Eastern Equatoria (5), Unity (8), Jonglei (13) and Central Equatoria (17). The Committee would welcome information disaggregated by sex and age.

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

3. The Committee observed that South Sudan reported on the financial challenges that the National Mine Action Authority, Ministries of Gender and Health, and civil society organizations face in relation to victim assistance implementation, affecting provisions of medical care, referrals, and socio-economic inclusion supports, and that poverty has forced landmine survivors and persons with disabilities to beg on the streets, and even result to occurrences of “death” among the victims.
4. The Committee welcomes information on existing or new requirements for disability, health, education, employment, development and poverty reduction activities needed to meet the needs of mine victims, and to refer victims to existing services, where possible.

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

5. The Committee observed that South Sudan had not reported on efforts to establish time-bound and measurable objectives in order to address the challenges mentioned under Action 12, and it encourages South Sudan to provide information in this regard.
6. The Committee observed that in 2017 South Sudan had reported that the passing of the draft national disability policy to protect all persons with disability was delayed by the national parliament of South Sudan until 2016 and it had hindered implementation of the Maputo Action Plan, and welcomes an update in this regard.

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

7. The Committee observed that South Sudan had not reported on enhancements in the integration of victim assistance into broader frameworks, and welcomes information on these matters.

**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 South Sudan had not reported on efforts to increase the availability of and accessibility to services, and it would welcome information on these matters.

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

9. The Committee observed that South Sudan had not reported on efforts to increase local capacities and enhance national or sub-national coordination for the implementation of victim assistance, and would welcome information on these matters.

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

10. The Committee observed that South Sudan had not reported on efforts concerning the inclusion and active participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in victim assistance programmes, and welcomes information on these matters.

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

11. The Committee observed that South Sudan had not reported on efforts to remove barriers, including on expansion of quality services in rural and remote areas, and on efforts to raise awareness on the rights of mine victims, in an age- and gender-sensitive manner, and would welcome 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 South Sudan is acting upon its commitments under Action 18, by reporting on major challenges and priorities in the field of victim assistance and by calling for cooperation and assistance, as follows:
  - a. Activities of the National Mine Action Authority, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of health, civil society organizations on victim assistance are hindered by financial challenges;
  - b. Despite the fact that ICRC is supporting rehabilitation in South Sudan, there is no proper medical care especially for those that need to be treated outside of South Sudan;
  - c. Efforts to advance social and economic inclusion and empowerment of mine victims remain inadequate;
  - d. The coordination forum has become very small as most of the organizations are not operational anymore;
  - e. Landmine victims and persons with disabilities experience “death” as a result of poverty;
  - f. Landmine victims and persons with disabilities beg on the streets for survival;
  - b. National organizations lack funding to implement their activities, and to participate in relevant planning and decision makings, and;
  - a. South Sudan appeals for assistance and funding for vocational training of mine victims and persons with disabilities in order to enable them to work, to compete in business sector, and to be able to generate income for their families.
13. The Committee welcomes additional information on these matters, including efforts to formulate challenges and priorities into time-bound and measurable plan of action, in advance of the upcoming Review Conference.