

**PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS  
COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE  
(Mozambique, Belgium, Chile and Italy)**

**Intersessional Meetings 22-24 May 2019**

**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 calendar year 2018 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 33 mines/ERW casualties in provinces of Ituri, Kasai, Kasai-Central, Nord-Kivu, Nord-Ubangi and Sud-Kivu in 2018 and until March 2019, including 10 men, 3 women, 14 boys and 6 girls, that increased the total number of all registered mines/ERW victims in the country to 2,743. The report also stated that the Democratic Republic of the Congo also considers members of families of victims, such as their children and other dependents – as indirect victims – and that 13 children of the parents who have been killed/injured in 2018, were considered as indirect victims.
3. The Committee would welcome information on the total number of indirect victims and measures in place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to support them.

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

4. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not report progress in implementing the action 12 and would welcome information in this regard.

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

5. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not report on action 13, neither it responded to conclusions made by the Committee in this regard last year. The Committee 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 the allocation of budgets for their implementations (Action #14)**

6. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not report on enhancements made in the integration of victim assistance in broader national policies and frameworks, neither it provided information on the allocation of resources to victim assistance programme of the country. The Committee would welcome information in this regard.

**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)**

7. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was implementing aspects of its commitments under action 15 by reporting progress in 2018, as follows:
  - a. Medical care: 20 victims and other persons with disabilities received rehabilitation equipment in Nord-Kivu province, with financial support provided by South Korea via UNMAS;
  - b. Socio-economic reintegration: 20 mine victims in Nord-Kivu was provided with income-generating kits, through supported provided by South Korea via UNMAS;
  - c. 4 April celebration of mine action day brought together 20 victims in Nord-Kivu province, providing them with an opportunity to express their needs for assistance, where a basketball game with participation of the victims also took place.
8. The Committee would welcome additional information – disaggregated by sex- and age – concerning the mine victims that have received other assistance in support of their social inclusion, information on emergency medical care, such as first aids provided to new casualties in 2018.

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

9. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that in the Victim Assistance Coordination Group held a meeting in March 2019 with the participation of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and other victim assistance stakeholders including the representatives of the mine victims' organisations.
10. The Committee would welcome further information on efforts to enhance coordination in 2018 and information concerning any progress made in 2018 in to strengthen local capacities to increase assistance to mines/ERW victims in the country.

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

11. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that victims continue to be taking part in all relevant activities including the activities of the mine action programme. As in previous year, the committee would welcome additional information on the frequency and the level of participation of mine victims in the reported activities and in other relevant areas.

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

12. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported marking the International Mine Action Day, 4 April 2019, with the participation of mine victims in Nord-Kivu province, and would encourage the country to report on efforts undertaken in removing barriers such as physical, attitudinal and communication barriers to increase victims' access to services, in the country.

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

13. The Committee observed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported that the country has not commenced providing post-traumatic rehabilitation assistance, but the report did not include any other remaining challenges, nor stated priorities of the victim assistance programme to meet the objectives of the Maputo Action Plan.

14. Like in 2018, 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, by the Fourth Review Conference.