

GRO  
MYSTUEN

**Statement on victim assistance by**

**NORWAY**

**10 MSP Mine Ban Convention**

Check against delivery

Mr. President,

There has been a considerable decline in the number of new victims of anti personnel mines over the past decade, and the reason for this is simple: States Parties to this Convention have complied with their obligations. They have stopped using anti personnel mines, they have stopped producing and transferring them, they have destroyed their stockpiles, and they have cleared contaminated mined areas. All of the elements of the Convention gravitate around victims: preventing new victims and assisting existing victims and survivors. Compliance with the obligations in the Mine Ban Convention is the only way of achieving its humanitarian objectives. Compliance makes a difference.

The Mine Ban Convention strengthened international law by establishing a new legal norm for victim assistance. Two new international instruments have since moved our understanding of victims and survivors' assistance forward.

First, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities takes a rights-based, inclusive and non-discriminatory approach. It recognizes, for example, that specific measures are both necessary and justified in order to accelerate and achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities. Formal equality before the law is not always enough. It also recognizes that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple layers of discrimination, and that special measures to secure their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms must be taken. Second, the Convention on Cluster Munitions has given victim assistance an even more prominent place, with stronger obligations and a broader definition of victims. Both of these very significant developments in international law reflect lessons learnt in the implementation of the Mine Ban Convention.

We believe that the co-existence of these different legal frameworks enhances the implementation of all three conventions, and we will work for increased use of potential synergies and mutually reinforcing implementation structures. In this regard I would like to mention that in May next year an international conference on persons with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies will be held in Oslo – yet another example of how the work we do and the lessons we learn contribute to developments in related areas.

The needs and participation of survivors and their experiences must be emphasized when priorities are set. We must continue to let our discussions and policies be informed by work done in the field. For example, the work of the Tromsø Mine Victim Resource Center has helped to demonstrate the importance of focusing on the development of local technology and capacity, adapted to identified concrete needs and challenges, to ensure first the survival and second the full social and economic inclusion of mine victims.

Both the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions clearly spell out that all States Parties in a position to do so shall provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration of victims. States in a position to provide assistance need to recognise the central role of national authorities of affected states and work with them on how their problem best can be addressed. To ensure national ownership, affected states need to invest in their own relevant ministries and agencies and provide them with the necessary mandate, authority and a certain amount of domestic funding. Compliance and implementation is not only about financial resources, but also about *how* resources, including financial, technical and human resources, are used most efficiently to address the rights and needs of victims.

Mr. President,

Let me finish by thanking the survivors for your active participation in the work we do. We have been, and will continue to be, partners in our tasks and mission. Nothing about you without you!

Thank you.