



European Union
Statement by

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Permanent Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

**Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
(Geneva, 30 November-4 December 2015)**

Victim Assistance

Geneva, 1 December 2015

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

**Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
EU Statement on Victim Assistance
1 December 2015**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

The Convention's norms on victim assistance are the clearest expression of the humanitarian spirit which drove its conclusion. The Maputo Action Plan adopted in June 2014 puts a focus on monitoring and supporting the implementation of the victim assistance commitments in a measurable and time bound way, as well as on the integration of victim assistance into broader national and regional policies and frameworks for disability and development. We thank the Victim Assistance Committee for its work over this past year. The Committee, as part of the new machinery adopted in Maputo is playing an important role to raise further awareness of the Maputo Action Plan commitments and assist States Parties in fulfilling their commitments on the ground.

Important progress on providing assistance to anti-personnel mine victims has been achieved. However, more efforts are needed in order to ensure adequate assistance to victims in accordance to their needs. For the European Union victim assistance is a core component of its Mine Action Strategy. We are committed to providing concrete and sustainable assistance to victims, their families and communities.

The EU believes that in order for victim assistance efforts to be sustainable in the longer term, they need to be integrated into broader disability policies. Our goal is to ensure full participation of survivors in decision and policy-making on issues affecting them, as well as their participation in all spheres of society, on an equal basis and in a sustainable way, and taking into account the gendered impact of the use of anti-personnel mines.

This goal can be better achieved taking also into consideration the continued relevance of and the need to develop synergies with other international instruments and norms. In this regard, we wish to underline the strong linkage with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. From its part the EU, which is a full party to the CRDP, continues to increase the attention paid to persons with disabilities in its development cooperation policies and programmes, and will continue to do so, while ensuring that the rights and needs of anti-personnel mine victims are taken into account.

The European Union is supporting the efforts of States Parties to fulfil their victim assistance commitments and to respond to the related challenges. The EU and its Member States have committed significant funds to victim assistance in many countries and regions of the world. Victim assistance continues to be one of the priority areas of EU projects in support of the Convention.

Thank you