



THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

18th Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

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Agenda item 9.a

Victim Assistance

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Mr President, esteemed colleagues,

Allow me to begin with the information that in the Revised Work Plan submitted for the next period of its mine action, the Republic of Croatia has given special emphasis to mine victim assistance activities. In line with the submitted document, the Republic of Croatia will continue to respect the principles of human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, and will, as in the previous period of mine action, continue to assist survivors, as well as the families of persons killed in mine accidents. We implement this goal and we will continue to do so through defined and established key ways of assisting mine victims, engaging state and civilian sectors of the Republic of Croatia through a number of organisations and individual initiatives. In the current year the Republic of Croatia has had only one civilian mine victim, when a man inadvertently entered a marked hazardous area and, unfortunately, was severely injured by an anti-personnel mine. Fortunately, since the end of 2016, there have been no persons killed by mines in Croatia.

I would like to use this opportunity to inform you about two specific activities conducted in the Republic of Croatia in the field of mine victim assistance.

The project entitled „Demining and socio-economic integration“ in the framework of the „Swiss – Croatian Co-operation Programme“, on which we have previously reported, and according to which in an area covering less than 2 km² almost 3,600 explosive remnants of war have been found and destroyed (out of which, 2,750 antipersonnel mines), continued in a soft component of socio-economic integration of mine victims. Namely, a field survey of mine victims and members of their families was organized and conducted with a very good response rate of 82.6% of available households. 423 mine victims and 473 immediate family members were interviewed. The survey collected information on social status, psycho-physical health, education, etc., that will be used in future activities, i.e. in the development programmes of psychosocial empowerment and launching initiatives to improve living conditions of mine victims and their families. Furthermore, the information collected will be entered into a unique data base on ERW victims. Additionally, it is planned to publish through the Project a brochure with rights and opportunities available to mine victims in the Republic of Croatia and a guide on how to use them.

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that by the end of this year we plan to pass a Law on civilian victims of the Homeland War, that will enable application for a status of war disabled civilians on the basis of disabilities caused by a disease linked to the Homeland war, among other things, due to disabilities caused by explosions of mines left over after the end of war operations. This law will provide the same legal security to civilian victims as already provided to Croatian War Veterans, among others to landmine survivors and families of persons killed by landmines. Personal disability allowance, allowance for care and assistance of another person, orthopaedic allowance, special allowance, professional rehabilitation and family disability allowance are among the rights established by the stated Law. We believe that the Law will greatly improve socioeconomic status of civilian mine victims in the Republic of Croatia.

In conclusion, Mr President and esteemed colleagues, we reiterate our readiness and perseverance to act in accordance with the provisions of the Convention in every field, with special contribution and care for mine victims.

Thank you