



ICRC

ICRC Statement on Victim Assistance,

Third Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Maputo, 23-27 June 2014

Over the last fifteen years, there have been significant achievements in regards to victim assistance. An increased number of affected countries have improved access to necessary services for persons with disabilities including survivors; an increased number of persons with disabilities including survivors have had, and continue to have, access to assistance, and the concept and the importance of Victim Assistance is now well understood.

The ICRC, through the physical rehabilitation support that we provide in most affected countries, has witnessed over the years an overall improvement in most of these countries; not only because of our support but also due to the increased national commitment and ownership. However, persons with disabilities including survivors, still face several barriers hampering access to services and full inclusion in their societies. Removing the barriers faced by persons with disabilities including survivors is directly linked to the development of national health and social systems and to the overall development of countries.

This Convention, along with other weapons treaties such as the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and Protocol V to the CCW on explosive remnants of war, along with human rights instruments such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), still has a strong role to play in addressing the needs of victims, survivors and other persons with disabilities. In this regard, we welcome Action # 30 of the Maputo Action Plan to maximize opportunities for creating synergies with other relevant instruments of international humanitarian law and human rights law, with a view to enhancing implementation of the Convention, streamlining its work and using resources as efficiently as possible.

We welcome also the victim assistance commitments in the Maputo Action Plan that pave the way for measurable improvements in the well-being of mine victims by the next Review Conference.

In addition, the ICRC welcomes the proposed new working mechanisms for addressing Victim Assistance within the framework of the Convention. We believe that the scope of work and the mandate given to the Victim Assistance Committee will guide, with efficiency, the work on victim assistance in the coming years.

To conclude, while many improvements have been achieved in regards to Victim Assistance, we should not forget that work still needs to be done to achieve the promises of the Convention. Over the years, the ICRC has shown its commitment to support Victim Assistance efforts at national and international level. We have also shown our commitment to ensuring that survivors have access to physical rehabilitation, which remains an important pillar of victim assistance, as restoring mobility is the first step towards enjoying such basic rights as access to food, shelter and education, finding a job and earning an income and, more generally, having the same opportunities as other members of society.

The ICRC will continue its support to the development of national capacities in the provision of appropriate services for persons with disabilities, including mine survivors. We will also ensure that persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, have access to services. In line with the Disability Inclusion Resolution adopted during the last Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC will continue to adopt a disability inclusive approach in the implementation of its activities.

Finally, the ICRC will be pleased to support the work of the Victim Assistance Committee in the spirit of partnership and in close collaboration with affected States.

We hope and trust that over the next five years States Parties will also continue and expand their efforts to address the needs of survivors, and affected families and communities.