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

8 October 2025

Original: English

Twenty-Second Meeting
Geneva, 1-5 December 2025
Item 9 (a) of the provisional agenda
Consideration of the general status and operation of the Convention
Assisting the victims: Conclusions and recommendations related to the mandate of the Committee on Victim Assistance

Report on activities and priorities for implementation 2025-2026*, **

Committee on Victim Assistance, (Austria, Burkina Faso (Chair), The Netherlands, Sri Lanka)

I. Activities of the Committee in 2025

1. On 24 January 2025, the Committee held its first meeting. During the initial meeting the Committee revisited the mandate of the Committee and discussed and agreed upon its 2025 work plan, developed in line with the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan (SRAAP). In preparation for 2025 activities, the Committee reviewed information on the status of implementation of victim assistance, and challenges reported by the 39 States Parties[1] with victim assistance responsibilities, in conjunction with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). After exploring several thematic areas, the Committee agreed to focus its efforts on implementation of Actions 30 and 31 of the SRAAP.

2. On 11 February 2025, the Committee hosted a day-long victim assistance retreat with participation of Victim Assistance (VA) and Cooperation and Assistance Coordinators of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), VA Coordinator of Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Implementation Support Unit of the CCM, the Secretariat of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Small Arms Survey. As in previous years, recognising the significance of collaboration, participants shared information on their activities, plans and priorities as well as common challenges they face in victim assistance or

* Reissued for technical reasons on 1 December 2025; previously under symbol APLC/MSP.22/2025/21.

** The present document was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent information.

[1] Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Niger, State of Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

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disability rights efforts. The Committee on Victim Assistance encouraged a cohesive approach to better assist affected States in fulfilling their victim assistance commitments.

3. On 3 March 2025, the Committee delivered a statement at the 32nd session of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in Geneva. The statement highlighted the adoption of the SRAAP, emphasising its victim assistance commitments, which include three direct references to the CRPD. These references strengthen synergies between disability rights and victim assistance. The Committee encouraged the CRPD Committee to consider victim assistance provisions when engaging with States Parties to the CRPD that also have victim assistance obligations, including Colombia, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, and State of Palestine, whose reports are scheduled for review in 2025.

4. On 10 March 2025, the Committee delivered a statement at the 58th Human Rights Council (HRC) annual debate on rights of persons with disabilities. The statement highlighted the newly adopted SRAAP and its significance for the rights of mine survivors, affected families and communities. The Committee welcomed a report[2] published by the OHCHR and noted the relevance of the HRC's theme "rights of persons with disabilities: digital and assistive technologies, countering cyberbullying, and digital inclusion" to the SRAAP. The Committee also addressed ongoing challenges, such as access to assistive technologies in rural and remote areas, especially in communities still affected by mines and other explosive ordnance (EO), which hinders assistance to mine victims.

5. On 26 March 2025, the Committee, together with the President and representatives of the Coordinating Committee participated in a workshop encouraging adherence of States Parties to their obligation to submit Article 7 reports by 30 April 2025 and encouraging States Parties to include detailed quantitative and qualitative information on implementation of their Convention obligations in line with the Guide to reporting and the commitments of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan. The Committee also presented the Victim Assistance Checklist and encouraged its use to establish baselines.

6. On 3 April 2025, the Committee hosted a side event "Victim Assistance in Disability Rights Contexts" during the 3rd Global Disability Summit (GDS) in Berlin. The GDS was a significant milestone in disability rights, with approximately 4,500 participants from 100 countries coming together to discuss and promote disability rights, which includes the rights of mine survivors. The side event contributed to the international community's better understanding of how to address the needs and uphold the rights of survivors of anti-personnel mines and other EO, particularly in humanitarian emergencies. The discussion underscored the importance of inclusive action, strengthened partnerships, and sustained dialogue between victim assistance and broader disability rights stakeholders. The event highlighted the need to continue taking advantage of synergies between international humanitarian disarmament law and human rights law, especially the CRPD.

7. The Committee extends its thanks to Ms. Elisabeth Riederer, Deputy Head of the Austrian Embassy in Berlin, H.E. Varuni Muthukumarana, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Germany, Hon. Mercy Maruva Dinha, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare of Zimbabwe, Mr. Antony Duttine, Technical Lead (Rehabilitation) of the World Health Organization (WHO), Mr. Michael Mwendwa, Disability Inclusion Advisor the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Ms. Suela Lala, Executive Director of the Together Foundation of Albania for their participation in the panel on "Victim Assistance in Disability Rights Contexts". The Committee also appreciates the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention for assisting the Committee in organising and moderating the side event.

8. On 9 –11 April 2025, on the sidelines of the 28th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors & UN Advisers, the Committee held bilateral meetings with several representatives of States Parties including representatives of Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Nigeria to discuss victim assistance, including matters related to reporting. The purpose of the bilateral meetings was to exchange information on implementation of the SRAAP, to encourage reporting on victim assistance and to offer assistance through tools

[2] The Report published by the OHCHR in 2025: Rights of persons with disabilities and digital technologies and devices, including assistive technologies.

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such as the VA checklist as well as ISU in-country support, in accordance with the mandate of the Committee. On 15 April members of the Victim Assistance committees and the ISUs of APMBC and CCM, as well as CCW ISU and Australia were invited for a working lunch hosted by The Netherlands to exchange views on strengthening synergies on Victim Assistance reporting across conventions, including the CRPD.

9. On 16 April 2025, the Committee discussed the need to work with and assist the States Parties with mine victims with implementation of Actions 30-39 of the SRAAP. In this regard, the Committee finalised and distributed a Checklist on implementation of the Victim Assistance commitments of the SRAAP to assist States Parties in establishing baselines, improve reporting and track implementation during the period of 2025-2029.

10. On 15 May 2025, the Committee invited ATscale, the Global Partnership for Assistive Technology, hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Geneva, to meet with the Committee and to provide an overview of their programmes and activities. ATscale aims to ensure that 500 million more people gain access to assistive technology by 2030. Dr. Satish Mishra, Head of Global Programmes at ATscale, provided an in-depth presentation on the importance of assistive technology in empowering persons with disabilities and mine survivors. He highlighted that an estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide require assistive technology to support their health and wellbeing. During the session, the Committee shared information on victim assistance efforts and discussed challenges in improving the affordability and accessibility of assistive technology for mine victims. The Committee expresses its appreciation to ATscale for the valuable briefing.

11. On 10 June 2025, the Committee delivered a statement at the 18th session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP18) to the CRPD in New York. The statement outlined victim assistance commitments under the SRAAP and emphasised the complementarities between the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the CRPD. With 38[3] of the 39 States Parties with victim assistance obligations, being parties to the CRPD, demonstrating how the two frameworks reinforce each other in practice. Recognising the shared challenges in victim assistance, the Committee expressed support for the COSP18 theme, which focuses on enhancing public awareness of the rights and contributions of persons with disabilities for social development leading up to the Second World Summit for Social Development.

12. In May and early June 2025, the Committee prepared preliminary observations on information reported by 25 States Parties on their victim assistance efforts through their annual Article 7 Report or other means. In early August, the Committee transmitted its preliminary observations to the respective States Parties and requested supplementary information.

13. On 17 June 2025, in parallel with the 17-20 June 2025 Intersessional Meetings, the Committee hosted a half-day Victim Assistance Experts Meeting. The meeting focused on implementation of commitments in the SRAAP, particularly Actions 30 and 31, the first two actions related to victim assistance. VA Experts from 14 States Parties provided updates on their efforts to implement Actions 30 and 31. The meeting was well attended by representatives of the States Parties, the UN, the ICBL, and other relevant organisations. Furthermore, on the margins of the Intersessional Meetings, the Committee held bilateral discussions with representatives of Angola, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Ukraine, focusing on the implementation of Actions 30–39 of the SRAAP and related reporting commitments.

14. In September, the Committee carried out efforts to prepare Committee's conclusions, recommendations and other documentation for the Twenty-Second Meeting of the States Parties (22MSP).

[3] Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Niger, State of Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan (signed and yet to ratify) Thailand, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

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II. Priorities of the Committee in 2026

15. In accordance with its mandate, the Committee will continue working on improved reporting by all the States Parties[4] with mine victims in areas under their jurisdiction or control, and will encourage in particular those that have not submitted Article 7 Report and/or have not provided information on victim assistance implementation in their Report – Burundi, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger, the State of Palestine and Uganda – to submit a report as soon as possible. The Committee will continue supporting the States Parties in strengthening the quality of reports including by encouraging the employment of the Guide to Reporting and to make use of the Victim Assistance Checklist.

16. Informed by information submitted by the States Parties with mine victims in areas under their jurisdiction or control on implementation of the SRAAP, in 2026 the Committee will work with the States Parties to seek increased attention on the following areas which are identified as underreported in 2025:

i. Developing a comprehensive directory of services available, accessible, and inclusive for all mine victims (Action 34, indicator 2);

ii. Stepping up efforts to increase resources and national capacity to make assistive technology affordable and accessible (Action 35, indicator 3);

iii. Ensuring the provision of peer-to-peer support including by integrating this model of support into public healthcare and other relevant systems to ensure it will be provided in a systemic and sustainable fashion (Action 36, indicator 2);

iv. Reporting on the number of mine and other explosive ordnance survivors and affected families accessing social and economic services (Action 37, indicator 2); and,

v. Ensuring the inclusion of mine victims and their access to humanitarian assistance, risk reduction, and conflict preparedness and protection programmes (Action 38, indicator 2).

17. The Committee will continue working with the States Parties to highlight the importance of integrating victim assistance into broader national frameworks, particularly policies and programmes related to the implementation of the CRPD.

18. The Committee will continue raising awareness on victim assistance in other forums such as the Human Rights Council, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD, the World Health Assembly and other relevant forums.

19. The Committee will continue its effort to capitalise on synergies with other disarmament, human rights, health, and disability frameworks, including through continued organisation of an inclusive retreat early in the year to coordinate implementation efforts as much as possible.

20. The Committee will continue to engage with the States Parties to promote consideration of gender and diversity in victim assistance activities, including by encouraging disaggregation of casualty and victim assistance data.

21. The Committee will continue supporting the exchange of experiences and best practices among victim assistance experts and other stakeholders including by hosting victim assistance experts meeting and other activities.

[4] Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Niger, the State of Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

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22. The Committee observed that the States Parties consistently report on shortages of resources as one of the key challenges affecting victim assistance efforts, hence, the Committee will encourage attention to the importance of:

i. Developing or strengthening national resource mobilisation plan for victim assistance (Action 41, indicator 2); and

ii. Taking advantage of the individualised approach to engage interested partners and donors (Action 41, indicator 3).

23. In collaboration with the Committee on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, the Committee will facilitate peer exchanges and cooperation among the States Parties in need and the States Parties in a position to share their experience and best practices.

24. The Committee also welcomes the adoption of by the European Union Council Decision in support of the SRAAP for the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and looks forward to its important role in supporting the implementation of victim assistance at a national and regional level.

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