

Statement on Victim Assistance
9th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions
2-4 September 2019



Thank you, Mr. President.

Respecting the rights and meeting the needs of cluster munition victims is an obligation and though challenging, achievable! Overtime, States Parties as well as implementing partners increasingly improved our understanding of the steps that need to be taken under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

States Parties need to keep the momentum. That means being accountable for addressing the challenges, making progress, and taking the lead on victim assistance. National ownership is essential to ensure the sustainability of services, ensuring they are available and accessible to victims all along their lives. Not only affected states are responsible. All states need to keep in mind the collective commitment to provide adequate and non-discriminatory assistance even as countries are cleared of contamination. The path to a cluster munition free world does not mean a donor-free CCM – funding of victim assistance is as vital as ever and will continue to be so for generations to come.

The active involvement of victims and their representative organizations in all processes that affect their life is a core principle of our work here. Civil society partners, including members of the CMC, are engaged and available to work with states at the national level to accelerate progress on action plans and meet goals and address indicators.

Of course, we must recognize that victim assistance in the Convention on Cluster Munitions has close ties with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, or CRPD. In fact, a human rights-based approach to these obligations is essential if an integrated approach to victim assistance is to be successful and sustainable.

Although national frameworks such as those for disability and development still require increased capacity, victim assistance under the Convention on Cluster Munitions can both benefit from these efforts and likewise improve access and inclusion of survivors and other persons with disabilities, in affected communities and beyond.

As we enter this last year of the Dubrovnik Action Plan and advance towards the next review conference, we call on all states to improve the quality of life of victims by dedicating earmarked funding for victim assistance and by ensuring relevant services are effectively delivered through broader humanitarian and development intervention in countries affected by cluster munitions. This is an obligation of those directly impacted and with responsibility for victims, and those others who are obliged, but moreover genuinely concerned, to see such progress.

Thank you.