

CMC Statement on Victim Assistance

CCM 2RC, 25-27 November 2020



Thank you Chair.

A lot has changed since we met here in Croatia five years ago at the First Review Conference. Like other survivors, I have seen, and faced, these changes personally. Myself, I am a former deminer, father of three, carer for my children, and my wife works in a hospital treating COVID patients.

While the work goes on, states, survivors, and service providers know that much more needs to be done to meet the legal obligation of victim assistance. This year the COVID-19 pandemic has created many additional unforeseen challenges.

The Cluster Munition Coalition and the Monitor will be following closely the national developments under the Lausanne Action Plan and its indicators. We call on all states to focus on achievable change in the lives of people injured by cluster munitions, the survivors, affected family members, and communities.

Many cluster munition victims live far from services and efforts are still needed so that victims can access healthcare, rehabilitation in all forms, or employment. Networks of survivors and partners continue to work to remove physical barriers and end discrimination; to ensure that VA is disability, and gender appropriate, age-sensitive, capable of responding to a diversity of needs.

Victim Assistance should be integrated into programs implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. The Cluster Munition Monitor notes that more effective coordination between ministries is needed. Services should be available ensuring those with special needs are not neglected.

Victim assistance must be considered in developing poverty reduction, human security, humanitarian disarmament with IMAS, environment and climate change strategies, and of course COVID responses. An approach that places victim assistance resources with officials and actors near to the needs and to coordinate action locally will improve the results.

Cluster Munition Coalition members and survivors' organizations support this essential work. We know that by acting together we can make this happen.

Thank you.