

Cluster Munitions Convention
13th Meeting of States Parties – Intersessional Meetings
7.-8.4.2025

Item 3d – Victim Assistance
Statement by Austria

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Mr. President,

Cluster munitions and their remnants continue to disproportionately impact civilians. 93% of all reported victims in 2023 were civilians and almost half of them children. Every incident stands for a human life that is affected. We need to do more to ensure that victim assistance can reach all of them.

Victim assistance has always been a truly cooperative endeavor. Survivors and affected communities know best how to most effectively address their needs. For Austria, a human-centred approach with the full, equal, effective and non-discriminatory participation of survivors in society remains at the heart of our Convention. We commend affected States and all stakeholders that have undertaken or supported measures for victim assistance. In the Lausanne Action Plan we agreed that we needed to ensure that victim assistance corresponds to the specific needs of victims of cluster munition victims. Incorporating gender and diversity considerations is therefore essential to ensure that all those in need can benefit from victim assistance in accordance with their rights.

Mr. President,

Victim assistance is at the heart of our humanitarian disarmament instruments. To effectively harness our expertise, resources and ensure a wider impact, we must make use of synergies in victim assistance with other existing instruments, including the CCM, Protocol V of the CCW, and the CRPD. In addition, the Political Declaration on EWIPA incorporates provisions on victim assistance and offers further potential for collaboration on a policy and practical level.

In this regard, the APMBC Victim Assistance Committee hosted a side event last week at the Global Disability Summit in Berlin, putting victim assistance in the disability rights context. The side event allowed to further foster synergies among victim assistance provisions in humanitarian disarmament efforts and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Austria currently serves as a Member of the Committee on Victim Assistance of the APMBC and as Victim Assistance Coordinator of the Protocol V of the CCW and clearly sees the benefit of further

investing in such synergies. In our roles in these conventions we will continue to engage with the Victim Assistance Coordinator of the CCM to share experience and knowledge to strengthen our work across the different instruments.

Thank you