



ICRC

**Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
Oslo, 25-29 November 2019**

**International Committee of the Red Cross
Statement on Victim Assistance**

As the ICRC Vice-President said in his general statement, a mine-free world is not a victim-free world. It is critical to acknowledge the lifelong needs of mine survivors and their families. This requires sustained mobilization of resources and political will from States Parties with mine survivors and those in a position to provide assistance, as well as the Convention community as a whole. The ICRC welcomes that the draft Action Plan commits States Parties to ensure “the full, equal and effective participation of mine victims in society, based on respect for human rights, gender equality, inclusion and non-discrimination”.

Today 33 States Parties have significant numbers of mine victims. While acknowledging the efforts made by most of these States Parties to improve the quality and quantity of health and physical rehabilitation programs for survivors, we note that many struggle to address fully the recognized needs and gaps in victim assistance. The ICRC wishes to stress the importance of integrating victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks related to the rights of persons with disabilities, and of enabling mine survivors to enjoy full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

The ICRC undertakes specific initiatives to address the needs of mine victims through its Physical Rehabilitation Programme, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Between 1979 and 2019, the Programme has supported 233 projects in 53 countries and one territory, allowing nearly 2 million people with disabilities to benefit from physical rehabilitation services, and 1.8 million assistive devices distributed, thanks to the generous contributions of donors. Today the ICRC’s Physical Rehabilitation Programme supports some 189 projects (physical rehabilitation centres, component factories, training institutions and local organizations) in 29 contexts, the beneficiaries of which include 12,344 mine/ERW survivors. Polypropylene technology developed by the ICRC is used by several organizations involved in physical rehabilitation, particularly in lower-income countries. Today, the Programme also supports people with disabilities to participate fully in society, through for example microeconomic assistance, educational and vocational training, and sport initiatives.

To conclude, much more needs to be done before we can claim that the Convention’s promises to victims, survivors and their families have been fulfilled. The ICRC stands ready to continue supporting States Parties to fully implement their obligations towards mine victims.

Thank you.