

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

### STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – ALGERIA

#### COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Italy, Chile, Sweden and Thailand)

Intersessional Meetings

30 June – 2 July 2020

#### Observations of the Committee on the information submitted by Algeria

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Algeria of updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

#### Mine casualties in 2019

2. The Committee observed that Algeria reported a total of 7,236 mine victims, recorded from 1963 through end of 2019. The figures also include indirect or family members of the victims. The committee would welcome additional information - disaggregated by gender, age and disabilities - on mine survivors among the 7,236 victims.

#### Establish or strengthen of a centralised database (Action #35)

3. The Committee would welcome information on the existence, creation or strengthening of a centralised database on mine survivors and other persons with disabilities for compiling and maintaining the information and making them available for the use of relevant national stakeholders.

#### Integrating victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Action #33)

4. The Committee observed that Algeria reported the integration of victim assistance into broader national frameworks such as laws, guidelines and projects related to meeting the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. The Committee would welcome further information on the designated government entity with the mandate to oversee efforts related to victim assistance including its integration into national frameworks.

#### Developing and implementing measurable, realistic and time-bound national action plan (Action #33)

5. The Committee would welcome information on the existence of a measurable, realistic and time-bound action plan on victim assistance or on disabilities which integrates the needs and rights of mine victims. The Committee would also welcome information on consideration of gender and diversity with regards to meeting the needs and rights of mine victims in victim assistance/disability action plan, and information on budget available for their implementation.

#### Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)

6. The Committee observed that Algeria reported some efforts (as outlined in paragraph 13) that may have contributed in removing barriers in areas of movement (transportation) and social and

economic services, in favour of mine survivors The Committee would welcome additional information on any other specific progress that may have been achieved in the removal of physical, social, political, attitudinal and communication barriers that may be faced by mine survivors in Algeria.

**Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)**

7. The Committee observed that Algeria reported engagements of different stakeholders such as the National People's Council of persons with disabilities (NPC), an Inter-ministerial Commission and other agencies active in areas of health, rehabilitation, social protection agencies and civil society organisations in meeting the needs of mine victims. The Committee would welcome further information on synergies and intersection between victim assistance activities and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Algeria.

**Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)**

8. The Committee observed that Algeria reported that access to healthcare has been guaranteed by legal frameworks, including by the latest law adopted in 2002. The Committee would welcome further information on availability of first and ongoing emergency medical care.

**Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)**

9. The Committee would welcome information on availability of referral mechanism and the existence of or plan to develop a national directory of services which can facilitate mine victims' access to services.

**Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy (Action #38)**

10. The Committee observed that Algeria reported that mine survivors benefit from health services on an equal basis with other members of their society and that mine victims have access to physical rehabilitation centres available throughout the country providing prostheses, physiotherapy and assistive devices. Algeria also reported that mine victims and other persons with disabilities benefit from hearing aids with 80% of the costs borne by insurance. Algeria indicated that rehabilitation services are provided by national rehabilitation centres with 74 branches; by nine hospitals that are specialised in functional rehabilitation; and by private companies. The Committee would welcome further information on the degree of progress achieved in meeting rehabilitation needs of mine victims, and the availability of occupational therapy beside other forms of rehabilitation services in Algeria.

**Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)**

11. The Committee observed that Algeria reported on availability of psychological support to everyone in need without discrimination, through the following activities:
- a) identification, orientation and support by Social Development Agency (ADS) through its branch teams, each of which includes at least one psychologist;
  - b) consultations on healthcare services;
  - c) peer support by associations of victims and persons with disabilities;

- d) twelve psychologists have been trained by Algerian Society of Research in Psychology (SARP) on providing appropriate psychological support to traumatic mine victims (1 for Biskra, 4 including a man for El Tarf, 2 for Sebdou, 3 for Igli and 2 for Béchar); and
- e) conducting an assessment/study was being considered to assess the problem, its scope and its implications.

**Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)**

12. The Committee observed that Algeria reported that the rights of persons with disabilities are protected by the 2002 Law on the Protection and Promotion of Disabled People, regardless of age, sex or types of disabilities. Algeria reported that the Law ensures access to healthcare, education, employment, sports and recreation and assistive devices.

13. Algeria also reported taking the following measures to meet the social and economic needs of mine victims:

- a) a guideline has been developed by the Algerian Inter-ministerial Committee with support of the UN Development Program (UNDP) and Humanity & Inclusion, to facilitate equal opportunities and benefits to mine victims, as available to other persons with disabilities, namely guaranteeing/providing the following services:
  - i. minimum income through a financial allocation to persons with disabilities;
  - ii. financial allowance to minors and single widows with no income;
  - iii. assistive devices;
  - iv. free of charge transport or reduced fares;
  - v. education and vocational training for children and adolescents with disabilities;
  - vi. work aid services such as work aid centre and educational forums;
  - vii. sheltered work support through workshops and working from home;
  - viii. a quota of 1% of employment opportunities to persons with disabilities;
  - ix. subsidised houses to persons with disabilities; and
  - x. making the environment accessible for the use of persons with disabilities.
- b) victims have been integrated in the social protection system, through which they have been provided with pensions or allowances; and
- c) victims' needs are integrated into social action of the State and implemented at the level of each municipality. Support services include social assistance, access to housing, the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market, including through tax incentives and other incentives.

**Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)**

14. The Committee would welcome information on any measures in place to ensure the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Action #41)**

15. The Committee observed that Algeria reported consultations with persons with disabilities, mine victims and their representative organisations in relevant activities such as in the process of developing a guide (see paragraph 13.a) and in humanitarian mine action activities.

## **Challenges in implementation of Algeria's Victim Assistance Commitments**

16. The Committee would welcome additional information on the main remaining challenges faced by Algeria in the fulfilment of its victim assistance commitments and any specific proposal it may have on how the Committee and the international community could be of further support to Algeria's efforts in fulling its victim assistance commitments.