

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION - IRAQ

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 Iraq.

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Iraq 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 Iraq reported 42 new casualties in 2019, including 24 men injured and 17 men and 1 woman killed in Anbar, Basra, Duhok, Erbil, Halabja, Mesan, Salah al-Din, Slimani and Wasit governorates. The report states that so far, the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) has recorded a total of 34,043 including 23,974 survivors (1,974 females, 22,000 males) and 10,069 deaths (1,898 females, 8,171 males) due to anti-personnel mines, ERW and IED explosions.

Establish or strengthen of a centralised (Action #35)

3. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that following the National Victim Assistance Stakeholder Dialogue held in 2018 in Baghdad, the DMA has been working with ministries of health, environment, labour and social affairs and the Commission of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs to develop a national action plan and to establish a unified database on disabilities and victim assistance. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made in developing a plan and a unified database, and the consideration of gender and diversity in these two projects.

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 Iraq reported that the Commission of the Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs leads national efforts in disabilities and the integration of victim assistance into plans, policies and legal frameworks. The Committee would welcome further information on progress achieved in the integration of victim assistance into national frameworks in Iraq.

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

5. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that the DMA has been working with relevant national stakeholders to develop a national action plan on victim assistance and disabilities. The Committee would encourage Iraq to ensure the plan will be measurable, realistic and time-bound and considers gender and age in accordance with the Oslo Action Plan.

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

6. The Committee observed that Iraq reported efforts made in the transportation sectors to improve access for persons with disabilities, including mine survivors. However, Iraq has not provided information on progress made concerning the removal of barriers to ensure social and economic inclusion of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in the country. The Committee would welcome information in this regard.

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 Iraq reported that the national Law (No. 38 of 2013) for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs ensures the needs and rights of all persons with disabilities including mine and ERW survivors including in areas of health, education, employment and development. The Committee would welcome further information on implementation of Law 38 and consideration of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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

8. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that there are no emergency medical services available in the vicinity to mine/ERW contaminated areas and that emergency aid is provided on an ad hoc basis subject to available means and resources in the area. Iraq reported that upon discharge from emergency surgical hospitals, survivors have been referred to rehabilitation and other services according to their needs. The Committee would welcome information on DMA's plans to address the lack of availability of first aid in and around mine/ERW contaminated areas.

Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)

9. The Committee observed that Iraq reported a lack of national referral mechanism due to financial constraints and the security situation but recognises the need for a referral mechanism to facilitate access to services, especially in remote areas. The Committee would welcome information on Iraq's plans addressing this challenge. Also, the Committee would appreciate information on the development of a national directory of services in accordance with Action #37.

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

10. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that there are 23 rehabilitation centres throughout the country providing different types of rehabilitation services and that the national Commission of Persons with Disabilities is mandated to ensure the provision of such services and the implementation of laws with regards to the rights and needs of persons with disabilities including mine survivors. The Committee would welcome information on whether the rehabilitation centres also provide occupational therapy, besides providing prosthetics, orthotics, physiotherapy and mobility devices.

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

11. The Committee would welcome information on progress made in providing psychological or psychosocial and peer-to-peer supports to mine victims.

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

12. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that meeting the social and economic needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities is part of the mandate of the Commission of Persons

with Disabilities and that efforts such as providing pensions, improving inclusive education, providing loans, conducting vocational trainings and allocating 5% of employment opportunities in public and private sectors have been made in accordance with Law 38. The Committee would welcome information on progress achieved in social and economic inclusion in 2019. The Committee would also welcome information on efforts that may have been invested to include the needs of mine victims in national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Iraq.

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

13. The Committee would welcome information on measures that are in place or that will be developed to meet the specific needs 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)

14. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that persons with disabilities participated in relevant efforts through their representatives in the Commission of Persons with Disabilities. The Committee would welcome specific information on participation and inclusion of mine survivors or their representative organisations.

Challenges in implementation of Iraq's Victim Assistance Commitments

15. The Committee would welcome additional information on the main challenges faced by Iraq 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 assistance to Iraq's victim assistance activities.