



Delegation of Italy to
the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

5th Review Conference

Victim Assistance

Siem Reap, 25 November 2024

Mr. President,

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you and the Cambodian Government on having undertaken a leading role towards the achievement of a mine free world. I would also like to thank you for the warm welcome to your country and for hosting us in this wonderful venue during the course of this week.

Strengthening all the provisions of the Convention, including the very important ones related to victim assistance, is crucial for a successful Review Conference. Providing assistance to victims is more important than ever due to growing conflicts that have a direct impact on the lives of millions of people in contaminated areas.

Mine action is at the core of the Italian humanitarian assistance and to this end a dedicated fund for humanitarian demining was established in 2001. Since the establishment of the fund, almost 100 million euros have been allocated to initiatives which meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in emergency contexts, such as the people with disabilities.

Our projects have a holistic and integrated multi-sector approach, which combines physical rehabilitation, psycho-social support and socio-economic integration.

Over the last year, in Afghanistan, we provided funds to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to support the organisation's activities aimed at guaranteeing and expanding access to good quality services for people with disabilities, including those transferred from other health facilities or remote areas, and helping hiring individuals with disabilities among the staff.

In Mali, still through the ICRC, we supported five physical rehabilitation centres, aiming at broadening the social inclusion of people with disabilities, in particular through sport and employment. In Somalia, we funded three physical rehabilitation centers managed by the National Red Cross and the Red Crescent with the aim of overcoming shortages of supplies and qualified personnel even investing in their training. The Organization is committed to making rehabilitation assistance available to a certain number of people by standardizing the procedures for referring patients to specialist care and promoting the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

We are aware that this sector is still severely underfunded. Even though we have made progress, there are still a number of challenges. It would be important, for instance, to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of rehabilitation-related technologies through more open and competitive markets and by ensuring information sharing among States. From this perspective, universities and private companies in the sector could be involved and we look with interest at tailored workshops and seminars exploring alternative methods of financing.

We support the comprehensive language developed this year in the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan which recalls the need for victim assistance to be integrated into broader national policies, plans, budgets and legal frameworks as well as the synergies identified with the UNSG Sustainable Development Goals and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

The Italian Cooperation will continue supporting victims assistance activities and initiatives also in the future and I would like to thank you again for letting us share our experience in this field.

Thank you, Mr. President.