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Technical assistance and capacity-building

Written statement* submitted by Every Casualty Worldwide, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[5 February 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Importance of Disaggregated Casualty Records for Victim Assistance and Restitution

We thank the International Expert for her report on the obstacles to the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement.

Colombia has a national registry of victims of the armed conflict, known as the Single Register of Victims, which is managed by the national Victims Unit. Although this register is an important tool for recognition and restitution, it is ill-equipped to recognize and address the needs of individuals who have suffered multiple events or forms of victimization. The Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (Colombian Campaign Against Landmines) and other organisations working with victims of the armed conflict in Colombia urge the authorities to ensure the Single Register of Victims reflects and addresses these complexities.

The Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas and Every Casualty Worldwide also wish to express our concern that the data on landmine casualties collected by the Colombian government does not adequately reflect the diverse identities of victims. We note that the government has recorded 12,401 landmine victims, of which 41 per cent are recorded as civilians and 59 per cent as members of the security forces. However, government data only identifies 621 of these victims as belonging to an ethnic minority - just 4 percent (490 individuals) are recorded as indigenous and one percent (131) as of African descent. Casualty records compiled by the Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas reveal that the number of casualties among ethnic minority communities is significantly higher than government data indicates. We urge the government to ensure that its casualty recording processes adequately document and recognise victims from ethnic minority communities, to ensure their needs are properly identified and addressed.

What assessment does the International Expert make of the Single Register of Victims, and how can this be strengthened to ensure all victims' needs are met?

Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.