Written submission by the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Interessional Meetings
(22 – 24 June 2021)

In addition to statements made by the European Union and the Netherlands would like to provide the following written submission in its national capacity. This submission is based on the questions posed in the guide for written submission.

The Intersessional meetings come six months after the Netherlands has been elected as the President of the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties (19MSP) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. It is a great honour and privilege for us to be working with all States Parties, other States and interested organisations, on this second year of implementation of the Oslo Action Plan (OAP). Our collective progress will be measured against the baseline we established at the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties. It is critical that we continue to strengthen our efforts and political commitment for the implementation of the OAP.

At the Fourth Review Conference in Oslo in 2019, we committed to strengthen our efforts in order to achieve our common goals of a mine-free world and the full and equal inclusion of survivors and victims. The Netherlands is fully committed to achieving progress in all areas of the Convention and to working with as many countries as possible to support their implementation efforts. Therefore, the Netherlands Presidency focuses on the three important themes:

1. capacity building in mine-affected countries;
2. innovation in areas such as stockpile retention for trainings purposes, or mine risk reduction and education programmes; and
3. an inclusive approach that focuses, among other things, on anchoring mental health and psychosocial support in victim assistance programmes.

Cooperation and Assistance

The Netherlands has a long record of funding mine action in different parts of the world and will continue to do so. We have learned that multi-annual planning of financing is important to enable implementers to operate in a cost-effective way and to achieve better results.

The heart of our efforts in Mine Action is our multiannual Mine Action and Cluster Munitions Programme, which is valued at EUR 51 million for the period 2020 – 2024. The programme has funding reserved for nine countries, namely Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, South Sudan, Somalia and Lao PDR.

Moreover, the programme comprises a contingency allocation that is available for emergency situations, innovative activities and gap financing. Our Mine Action and Cluster Munitions Programme has a strong focus on both gender and capacity building and aligns strongly with action 45 of the Oslo Action Plan. We also support the work of UNMAS through
an annual voluntary unearmarked contribution of EUR 3 mln, and through UNDP support the Lebanon Mine Action Center with capacity building. In addition, we continue to support the institutional framework of the Convention through our annual support to the ISU of EUR 40,000, and to its sponsorship programme.

We are delighted with the brand new Cooperation and Assistance Fund that was recently launched by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance and will donate EUR 10,000 to the Fund. We trust the Fund will provide opportunities for mine-affected countries to share experiences, knowledge and lessons learned. Thereby supporting the implementation of action 47 of the Oslo Action Plan

**Universalization**

Ever since the inception of the Ottawa Treaty, the Netherlands has avidly supported efforts to rid the world of anti-personnel landmines. Much progress has been made and we express our gratitude to everyone who worked hard in achieving this progress. The fight for a mine free world is not over. It is up to us to implement the Oslo Action Plan and push for further universalization of the Convention. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention remains a vital and essential multilateral tool for achieving a safer world.

In the OAP, we agreed that universalization and the promotion of the Convention is a collective responsibility of all States Parties. We calls upon all States Parties to strengthen their efforts towards universalization and the implementation of the OAP. Notwithstanding the OAP, the President of the Meeting of the States Parties/Review Conference remains mandated to spearhead the universalization of the Convention.

As current President of the 19th MSP, the Netherlands recognizes that these efforts must be sustainable and tailor-made. This means ensuring that universalization efforts are continued over time, beyond the term of one Presidency. Thus, together with the ISU and the Coordinating Committee, the Netherlands Presidency has developed a universalization strategy that will guide long-term efforts towards the promotion of the Convention.

**Stockpile destruction and retained mines**

The Oslo Action Plan calls upon States Parties to annually review the number of mines retained to ensure that they do not exceed the minimum number absolutely necessary for permitted purposes, i.e. training, and to destroy all anti-personnel mines that exceed that number. Following this call, the Netherlands reviewed its stockpile of landmines permitted under the Convention. It was deemed that the amount could be further decreased.

As a result, the Netherlands has initiated the destruction of an additional 606 landmines. The Netherlands entered a contract with Esplodenti Sabino, a facility in Italy that would destruct the landmines in 2020. Unfortunately, a blast occurred in the facility in December 2020, which has delayed the destruction of the already transferred mines. The Netherlands is in close contact with the facility to examine what further steps can be taken to ensure their destruction in a timely manner. The
Netherlands views Article 3 of the Convention as essential and promises to actively and transparently share developments on this front with State Parties.

As indicated in our annual article 7 transparency report, as of 31 December 2020 the Netherlands currently has retained 270 landmines for training purposes. The Netherlands is actively working to substitute live mines for training purposes with 3D-printed ones. We hope to be able to provide a further update on this during the upcoming MSP. We encourage other States Parties to also review their stockpile to ensure they only hold the absolute minimum number of mines permitted under the Convention. Every mine that is destroyed, is another step towards a global zero.

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