

Thank you very much Co-chair,

Let me go briefly into the Dutch mine clearance policy in implementing the Nairobi Action Plan. I would like to highlight the principles by which we hope to maximise the effectiveness and the efficiency.

First element I would like to mention is a strong focus on countries that have ratified the Ottawa Convention, with only very rare exceptions when humanitarian needs are extremely high.

Secondly we concentrate on mine clearance in countries and areas where the immediate risk of mines to the population is the greatest;

Thirdly, we put a heavy emphasis on local ownership, capacity building, integration into broader development planning and strong coordination.

Fourth: full integration of mine action in broader policy objectives; in our case into the Dutch Stability Fund supporting activities that create a stable and safe environment in conflict and former conflict regions.

Fifth key element is the long term commitment from our side and predictability of our funding. Four-year programme-wide funding arrangements have been made with our ngo-partners.

The Netherlands, as the 7th largest donor in mine action over the past five years, remains committed to providing ample assistance in meeting the treaty obligations on mine clearance, with a budget of more than 13 million Euros per year.

Finally, on a very much related issue, I would like to mention the clearance of ERW, which is an integral part of our mine action programmes. In this respect I am happy to announce that the Netherlands' parliament has just ratified Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on ERW. We hope for an early entry into force with as many states parties as possible. A question that will soon come up is how we can best create a link between the implementation mechanisms of the Ottawa Convention on anti personnel mines and Protocol V on ERW. After all the two problems are often interrelated, as the briefings at this intersessional from many affected countries indicate. Suggestions are most welcome.

Thank you very much.