

# 3 December 2015 | Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Statement on strengthening financial governance and transparency within the ISU

## Statement by Mr. Mark Verstedden, First Secretary for Disarmament

Mr President,

Today you have planned a whole day to discuss about administrative and financial issues.

If we want to have a successful convention administrative and financial issues do matter. Let us not shy away from that, we have to put our money where our mouth is.

Let me start by underlining that we fully support the ISU. The ISU has done and is doing a tremendous job in assisting the President, the Coordination Committee, and most importantly states parties that request its assistance. It is safe to say that the ISU was and is key in making this Convention and its implementation into a success.

The Netherlands has been a staunch supporter of the ISU over the years - also financially. Also this year we will contribute 50.000 euro to the ISU - of which 10.000 will go into the financial buffer.

And Juan-Carlos, let me underline publicly that you can continue to count on our support as we strongly believe the ISU has an important role to play to be able to reach our common goal of a mine free world in 2025.

But we also have to face realities.

The Convention entered a new phase in its existence. We are now in a more business like environment. But even when less money is available progress towards a mine free world remains very much possible. We just have to do things more efficient and smarter. And as we have made much progress over the years, the challenges facing us are still fierce, but a lot less as when we started in 1999.

Another reality is that we were confronted with a deficit of 200.000 CHF by the ISU at the beginning of this year. This deficit was very kindly covered by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining or GICHD for which we would like to thank them again. GICHD set one condition on covering the deficit, namely that this should never happen again.

Mr President,

When you took up the Presidency, you rightfully took this condition very seriously. We simply cannot afford to spend more money as we earn.

The discussions on the financial issue you have started during our intersessional meetings have resulted in the documents we will hopefully adopt later today. The texts of these document are the products of long negotiations in five informal meetings you have organized. In our view you have reached the best possible compromise. We would very much like to thank you for the excellent work you and your team did to reach this compromise.

A key element in your proposals is the creation of a financial buffer out of which possible deficits in the future can be covered, should that be necessary. As financing under this Convention has traditionally been of a voluntary nature, we believe that setting up such a buffer can indeed help to make the finances more sustainable. That is provided that we strictly adhere to the rules you have set out on the establishment and maintenance of the buffer.

With the adoption of these documents we should be able to avoid deficits in the future as was requested by GICHD. And more importantly, this will mean that the ISU can continue to do its good work.

To sum up Mr President, the Netherlands supports your proposals as they stand.

Thank you.