

16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention  
Vienna, 18-21 December 2017.

Statements of the Kingdom of Belgium  
on the thematic matters in agenda item 11.

Check against delivery.

Mr. President,

Let me start by expressing the full **support of my delegation to Austria** during this 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention. In order to implement the Maputo Action Plan, we subscribe to the **priorities of the Austrian Presidency** in terms of universalization, victim assistance, mine clearance, stockpile destruction and on the financial viability of our Convention.

I wish to align Belgium with the statements made by the Representative of the European Union during the general debate and other segments of our Meeting and would like to add these following statements in a national capacity.

The Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In her opening remarks of the panel entitled "*Keeping People at the Heart of the Convention : Effective Victim Assistance*", **H.R.H. Princess Astrid** will deliver tomorrow the anniversary message of my country.

Belgium was a **pioneer** in the fight against anti-personnel mines. Our country was indeed the very first country worldwide to adopt a national legislation banning these weapons **in 1995. The Brussels Declaration** of June 1997 was a decisive step in the process of the adoption and signature of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The Ottawa Convention, as a tool to put an end to the human suffering caused by these weapons, shows that **a multilateral approach with concrete results** contributes to stability, security and peace. It is with this conviction that Belgium campaigns for a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council for the period 2019-2020 under the motto "*Forging Consensus, Acting for Peace*".