



## **Statement of the Netherlands**

**under agenda item 7 on**

### **General Exchange of Views**

**Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties of the**

### **Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

**by H.E. Rob Gabrielse, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the  
Conference on Disarmament**

Thank you Madam President,

The Netherlands would like to express its gratitude to you, Ambassador Dalil, for all your efforts as the President of this year's Meeting of States Parties and the extensive preparations leading up to it. Let me assure you that you have the full support of the Netherlands' delegation.

In addition to the statement delivered by the EU, the Netherlands would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

With two new members to the Convention, we have made progress in broadening the reach of the Ottawa Convention with a view to a mine free world by 2025. We should do our utmost to achieve the goals set during the Maputo Review Conference in 2014.

The Netherlands is deeply concerned about the use of anti-personnel landmines by government forces and non-state armed groups in different parts of the world. We will revert to this issue in more detail under agenda item 9 (d).

The Netherlands supports States Parties and non-States Parties in Mine Action to achieve our shared ambition to reach a world free of mines by 2025 through our multiannual Mine Action and Cluster Munitions Programme, and other means of funding. This year we made an extra contribution to mine action activities in Afghanistan. We will revert to this issue in more detail under agenda item 9 (c).

#### [INFORMAL PRESENTATION ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION]

We are pleased to see that Ukraine is back in compliance again with the Convention's requirements by submitting its overdue Article 5 extension request. The Netherlands would like to stress the importance of submitting extension requests and thanks the other States Parties who have done so this year in accordance with their obligations. The Netherlands believes it is important that mine clearance is conducted in a timely manner, within the set deadlines. At the same time we understand that for many reasons this is not always feasible. And therefore we value the transparency and cooperation that accompanies the process of the submission of extension requests.

#### [UNIVERSALIZING THE CONVENTION]

We are glad that the Convention attracts continued interest. We commend the President's work on pursuing States to join the Convention, especially regarding states in Central and South Asia. We are delighted that the total number of ratifications and accessions to the Convention has increased to 164. With 33 states not being party to the Convention we urge other states to follow suit.

#### [TRANSPARENCY AND THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION]

To reach the goals set at the Maputo Review Conference, we believe it is important for States Parties to be as open and transparent as possible regarding the destruction of mines, their stockpiles, and international cooperation. We therefore urge all states to submit their progress reports and other measures taken to ensure compliance with the treaty. We can only have a mine free world if the States Parties collaborate with each other and transparency is essential for such cooperation.

[REFLECTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5]

We have taken note of discussions revolving around the understanding of Article 5 of the Convention. As a member of the Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, we have worked together with other committee members to review recurring issues regarding the definitions within the Article. The results of this review can be found in the reflections on Article 5 submitted by the Committee. Consensus has to be reached regarding how to address differences in understanding of Article 5 and we fully support the reflections as they are aimed to give further clarification. We hope that these understandings will also be reflected in the International Mine Action Standards currently being updated to take into account the complexity of improvised devices.

Let me conclude by saying that the Netherlands is committed to working closely with all States Parties in a constructive manner in order to secure an outcome of this Meeting of States Parties that further strengthens the Convention and brings a mine free world closer. Together we can save the lives of people by ensuring their homes, land, and communities are without the threat of any mines.

Thank you, Madam President.