



Kingdom of the Netherlands

## **Statement of the Netherlands**

**under agenda item 8 on**

### **Informal Presentation of extension requests**

**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 Vice-President,

In addition to the statement to be delivered by the EU on this issue under another agenda item, the Netherlands would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

[Extension requests other countries]

Before we start going into Ukraine's extension request, the Netherlands would like to thank Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, Sudan and the United Kingdom for submitting an extension requests and for presenting them.

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. We value the transparency and cooperation that accompanies the process of the submission of extension requests. Most information that has been presented today and yesterday is not new to us. You have kept the State Parties abreast of your mine action programmes and progress in implementing Article 5 throughout the year. As a member of the Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, the Netherlands commends you for

your transparency in this process. This type of cooperation between affected states and treaty bodies, where there is continuous engagement to ensure the daily implementation of the commitments, makes this Convention such a success. Of course, as affected countries, you play the most important role in activities related to Article 5.

[Ukraine]

With respect to Ukraine, we would like to thank the country for submitting its extension request. Following the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and the conflicts in parts of eastern Ukraine, the Netherlands recognizes the challenges Ukraine is facing with newly identified mined areas under its jurisdiction but in many cases outside of its control. The Netherlands offers its solidarity in this regard. In these unprecedented circumstances, the Netherlands welcomes the extension request submission by Ukraine, in order for it to return to compliance with Article 5. At the same time, bearing in mind our role in the Article 5 Implementation Committee, we would have preferred Ukraine submitted its request in accordance with the agreed 'process for the preparation, submission and consideration of requests for extensions to Article 5 deadlines', as established by the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of State Parties. Unfortunately, it was therefore not possible to hold the extended cooperative dialogue between the Committee and Ukraine, which the Committee has conducted with all the other relevant countries, in order to clarify and improve the request.

Again, the Netherlands appreciates the dialogue we had with Ukraine leading up to the request and we look forward to the continued cooperation in order to ensure accurate reporting on the challenges faced and progress made.

Lastly, the Netherlands believes it is important that assistance is provided to Ukraine in dealing with the challenges of anti-personnel mines. Therefore, in 2018 the Netherlands has provided funds to Ukraine via our partner The HALO Trust to conduct survey, clear mined areas and provide capacity building for local staff. The Netherlands intends to continue this support throughout 2019.

Thank you, Madam Vice-President.