



Statement of the Netherlands
under agenda item 9 (b) (i) on
Clearing mined areas
Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties of the
Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Thank you Madam President,

As a member of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, we would like to thank our fellow member countries, in particular our Chair, for the incredible amounts of work they have done for this Convention. We would also like to thank the ISU for their invaluable support and hard work. This Committee fulfils a crucial role in an important area of this Convention, namely ensuring that mined areas are cleared, within the deadlines. Clearing anti-personnel mines saves lives every day.

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

In the last 20 years significant progress has been made to clear areas from anti-personnel mines, which cause so much human suffering. In order to achieve a mine free world in the following seven years, we have to keep up this work. The Netherlands would like to congratulate Mauritania for removing its last mines from its territory and effectively becoming mine free. We look forward to the official submission of declaration of completion for the next Meeting of States Parties.

The Netherlands would like to remind state parties, specifically Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Yemen, of the importance of submitting a progress report on Article 5

implementation. For state parties to assist and cooperate with mine-affected states, it is crucial to have the most up-to-date information available.

The Netherlands would like to emphasise the importance of conducting mine clearance in an effective way by optimal use of new technologies and methodologies, for example on land release via non-technical survey. Additionally, when clearing anti-personnel mines, including those of improvised nature, safety and security of personnel remains of utmost importance. This means using up-to-date standards that take into account the different contexts and purposes in which clearance takes place. In this regard, we take note of the completion of the United Nations Improvised Explosive Device Disposal Standards, coordinated by UNMAS, that are applicable where the context or mandate is not humanitarian. The Netherlands also looks forward to the swift completion of the ongoing update of the International Mine Action Standards with regard to improvised explosive devices, which serve as the guiding framework for humanitarian mine action operations.

The Netherlands believes that as part of our joint commitment to implement the Convention, it is important that we continue to have an open and frank discussion about how to implement it. This means addressing issues such as definitions with regard to the types of devices we are dealing with and what falls under this Convention and what not, how and when to declare completion and how we set priorities. It does not mean in any way to rewrite the Convention's text, but we need to ensure we are on the same page when implementing it. For example, the flyer distributed posing the question: 'which of the below are anti-personnel mines?' is very relevant. We need to continue our discussion on these issues and in this regard the Netherlands finds the document prepared by the Article 5 Implementation Committee on 'Reflections and understandings on the implementation and completion of Article 5 mine clearance obligations' very helpful. We look forward to a continued discussion.

Thank you, Madam President.