

Statement of The Netherlands under agenda item 8d (assisting the victims)

Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Siem Reap, Cambodia, November 28, 2024

Thank you Mr. President,

In addition to the statements delivered by the EU, the Netherlands would like to make some additional remarks in its national capacity. As a junior member of the APMBC Victim Assistance Committee, and together with Burkina Faso and Zambia, and chaired by Slovenia, the Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the new Siem Reap Angkor Action Plan and actions #30 to #39 on Victim Assistance.

The Oslo Action Plan has delivered significant progress towards more effective and inclusive implementation of the Victim Assistance related areas of work. This new Action Plan renews these commitments and further strengthens them. It incorporates lessons learned and further enhances synergies between the APMBC and international frameworks such as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the Convention of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Agenda, and the World Health Organization.

My delegation appreciates that health, mental health and psychosocial support and wellbeing are being strengthened in the new Action Plan.

Since a number of years, the Netherlands, together with a large circle of allies, advocates for a structural and comprehensive integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in all crisis responses. We need to address physical needs as well as mental needs. We want strategies, action plans, mandates and budgets to *explicitly* include MHPSS.

Explicitly, because internationally, too often the importance of mental and psychosocial wellbeing - as an enabler to cope with adversities, to overcome them, to survive and thrive - is ignored, because of stigma, or because it is seen as too complex.

The lack of sufficient international attention and financing to Victim Assistance in general and MHPSS more specifically is persistent. Multisectoral cooperation is of the essence: between ministries (Health, Education, Social Protection, Security) and between the various areas of international cooperation such as humanitarian action, peace-building, mine action and the work related to displaced communities.

In this respect, we welcome the close cooperation over the past years and in preparing the Siem Reap Action Plan between Mine Action specialists and humanitarian experts on MHPSS, such as the Inter Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on MHPSS.

Mr. President.

In conclusion, my delegation will continue to contribute actively as a dedicated member of the APMBC Victim Assistance committee also next year, and we look forward to working with all stakeholders involved.

Thank you.