

**THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION**
Statement by H.E. Henk Cor van der Kwast, Ambassador for Disarmament
Maputo, 24th June 2014

Mr President,

In our statement yesterday I referred to A,B, C, and D. I will elaborate today on the A for Ambition and the C for Commitment and Completion.

We have heard today a rich overview from state parties that are working hard to implement the convention, to implement the targets they have set for themselves by becoming a party to this convention.

We have a solid draft actionplan and a draft document on the machinery before us. These documents enable us to be *ambitious*. We also have a new concept of partnership for completion. We believe in this concept. Countries that have a clear and strategic approach to make their country minefree should be supported. Ownership of minefree policies is of the essence, countries have to do it themselves.

At the same time the international community and donor countries should stand ready to support this. As a small country the Netherlands is the 5th donor on demining, we put our money where our mouth is. Commitment of donor countries is very important.

Mr President,

We believe that a minefree world can indeed be realized. We strongly believe that the in spirit in which this convention was founded we own it to ourselves to be ambitious. I am sure we are not alone in this. We think we can best show this ambition by setting a political target, a date by which we all together strive to complete our outstanding business, a date by which we aim to complete the clearing of mines, a date by which we aim to no longer have mine casualties

In our opinion commitment to such a date is helpful for our political objective. 2025 is such a date, we should strive to finalise the most important mine clearance activities before 2025. This is doable since all current state parties have deadlines before 2022.

A lot of progress has been made already: almost 30 countries are now free of anti-personnel mines. Most countries have destroyed their stockpiles. We are now with 161 State Parties and have set such a strong norm against the use of anti-personnel mines that this norm is also widely respected by countries outside of the Convention. Victims of anti-personnel mines are better assisted as 15 years ago. And most importantly : the number of mine victims has gone down.

In Maputo we should now give a push forward : if Mozambique can do it in 15 years, I have difficulty to see why other countries cannot do it in 25 years.

I would appreciate if mine clearing organisations and ngo's would give us their views about the target date. They are after all the ones who are clearing the mines. I ask them, can it realistically be done ?

Mr president let me be clear, we are not talking about legal obligations. The legal obligations are in the APLC, that does not change, the convention is and remains the basis for our commitments. We are talking here about a political commitment, about State Parties striving to complete their respective timebound obligations under their jurisdiction.

Anit-personnel mines still claim to many lives and victims, we owe it to the victims to make progress here in Maputo. Political will is important to move forward. In a recent interview former SG Koffi Annan stated that bureaucrats often are the greatest problem for change. Let us not be a problem, but work on the solution and be ambitious here and go for it !

Thank your Mr President.