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**THIRD REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION (High Level segment)
Statement by H.E. Henk Cor van der Kwast, Ambassador for
Disarmament
Maputo, June 27 2014**

Mr President, [Your Royal Highnesses Prince Mired and Princes Astrid and, UN Special Representative Angela Kane, Excellency's, Ladies and Gentlemen]

In the soccer competition, playing is not enough; you have to score to win.

Today we make history. 15 years after the entry into force of the APLC, we aspire to complete the APLC obligations by 2025. This shows the continued historic value of the APLC and the commitment of State Parties to ban an indiscriminating weapon that causes enormous human suffering.

Before congratulating all of you with this historic step, I would first of all like to express again my thanks to your Excellency Deputy Minister Banze and to Mozambique for the warm hospitality and the excellent organisation of the 3rd Review Conference. The smooth way in which the whole organisation developed from the swinging party on Sunday evening to the serious discussions during the week and the dignity of this high level meeting. An impressive and good result for the State Parties and the APLC. We are proud the Netherlands could contribute to that success.

I would also express the gratitude of our government for the way the diplomatic process was handled. The problem with diplomacy is sometimes that you see the result, but not the hard work that is behind it. Because Mozambique started early in Geneva, held extensive consultations, and really tried to combine ambition with broad agreement, we have, in our opinion, an excellent result in the 3 Maputo documents. I extend my compliments to Ambassador Commissario and his team.

I also want to thank the Mozambican government for inviting us to the National celebration of 38 years of independence last Wednesday. It shows respect and openness that conference guests were invited to celebrate this with you. I was honoured to be part of that.

Although the Netherlands would have liked language that was somewhat stronger, we are content with the aspirational date of 2025 in the political declaration. It translates our ambition and commitment into an objective; we have a roadmap for the coming ten years. Coming back to a country that made a historic success to become APLM free after 15 years and to set the historic objective for the coming 11 years has great value. Commitment and completion will not be easy, but the future is built on the past and ambition is our guiding principle.

As the 5th donor on mine action the Netherlands have committed themselves via a multi annual program for long lasting support for mine clearance. Over the last years we also have been active as a co-chair of the committee for mine clearance. For the coming years we are ready to contribute to the work of the convention as a member of the committee for cooperative compliance or the committee on cooperation and assistance. We have contributed in the past via voluntary contributions to the ISU and we will continue to do so. At the same time we are somewhat worried about the small number of states that do contribute. The amount of the contribution does not matter, but we need more states that contribute. A state parties' organisation and the valuable work of the ISU should receive broad support!

We are grateful for those states that gave an overview of the work they have done to implement the convention and the progress made. States that have serious programs on mine clearing should receive broad support from the international community and donor countries. The commitment and ambition for 2025 is in our opinion also a commitment for donor countries.

We are worried about states that seem to take their commitments less serious. States that have a serious mine problem and that do not show up at a meeting like this one. States that do not report and that are far behind in destruction of stockpiles. Deadlines are an element of the convention, when there are good reasons for extension we have no problem with such

extensions. Extension of deadlines should however not become an automatic mechanism, but should be a result of serious consideration. The APLC is not a "good weather convention".

Mr President,

We want to thank HRH Prince Mired and HRH Princess Astrid for the work they have done and are doing to extend the number of state parties. From the Netherlands point of view this work should be broadly supported by all state parties and whenever possible we should ask attention for further universalization of the convention. We would also invite observer states present here to consider to become a state party.

At this place I would also express our gratitude to the mine clearers that are in the frontline of progressing the objectives of the convention. We are also very grateful work for the work done by UN organisations, the ICRC and many NGO's like HALO and ICBL (unfortunately I cannot mention them all). The role of NGO's has been essential for the convention, their work in awareness raising, in mine clearing, in research and documentation, but also in lobbying is of great value for the Netherlands and we will continue to support that.

Last but not least, victim assistance needs our attention; it should remain an essential element of the work under the APLC. We thank Colombia, Handicap International and the EU for the work done via bridges between worlds. We do favour further discussion on the integration of victim assistance into broader disability frameworks.

The Netherlands as a member of the EU and therefore aligns itself with the different EU statements.

Finally: Mozambique is a unique example of progress in this field we hope that this example and this historic conference will set the frame work for making landmines history.

Thank you, Mr President.