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CCW Fourth Review Conference

Statement by Mr Pieter van Donkersgoed, Coordinator of the Steering Committee of the CCW Sponsorship Programme to Main Committee I

Mr Chairman,

It is a pleasure to present the report of the CCW Sponsorship Programme, contained in document CCW/CONF.IV/7, dated 30 September 2011. This report and its recommendations are put forward by the Sponsorship Programme's Steering Committee, which is made up of donor countries and CCW office holders. The Report reviews the work of the Sponsorship Programme since its establishment and in its recommendations proposes the way forward for the Programme's continuation and ongoing development. As many of you will be aware, the establishment of the Sponsorship Programme was one of the concrete decisions taken at the Third Review Conference in 2006. That decision outlines the Sponsorship Programme's general principles, basic objectives, essential operational purposes, and fundamental operational modalities.

One of the main reasons for the Sponsorship Programme's establishment was to ensure participation in CCW meetings by all regions. Between 1 November 2007 and 1 September 2011, 145 delegates and experts have benefited from the Sponsorship Programme. This does not include the 28 participants who are attending this month's CCW meetings. The beneficiaries have come from 50 countries representative of all continents. The Sponsorship Programme has fulfilled the goal of ensuring widespread representation at CCW meetings. It has supported the attendance of experts at a variety of CCW meetings, including the Meetings of Experts for Amended Protocol II and Protocol V.

The report outlines the briefings that are provided to Sponsorship Programme participants. These take place during CCW meetings and are an opportunity to provide beneficiaries with information on the goals, universalization and implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. In addition, participants are asked to provide feedback via a questionnaire. This feedback has provided several useful ideas such as highlighting that universalization of the Convention would be significantly facilitated by personal contacts.

It is worth mentioning that in 2009 the Steering Committee funded the production of a film on Protocol V and a workshop on ERW Clearance, Removal and Destruction which took place in Budapest in June 2009. The film, entitled "Before the Blast", provides detailed information on the main elements of Protocol V and has become a useful instrument for policy makers, military experts and diplomats.

As well as identifying possible participants and considering how to support implementation of the CCW, the Steering Committee has the important (and sometimes difficult) task of raising funds for the Programme, because it is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. Since its establishment the Sponsorship Programme has received

contributions from the following States: Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Hungary, India, (including a recent contribution of 10.000 US dollars), Lithuania, The Netherlands, Spain, and Turkey, and a substantial contribution from the European Union. As per 1 September 2011, the total of these contributions amounted to nearly 700.000 Swiss francs. I take this opportunity to thank all contributors wholeheartedly: without their support our work would be impossible, literally. I therefore call on all States Parties and others to contribute to the Programme.

Finally, I come to the recommendations set out in paragraph 31 of the report. These call for the continuation of the Sponsorship Programme in line with its current mandate. It urges the Programme to 'explore all opportunities to advance awareness raising, universalization and implementation of the Convention and its Protocols'. You will see that in paragraph 31(d) the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining is asked to continue to administer the programme and then in sub-paragraph (e) the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs is tasked with assessing alternative options for administering the Programme. The purpose of this assessment is to explore all options for ensuring the most efficient and cost effective operation of the Sponsorship Programme.

I would like to thank all that have supported the Programme and me as its coordinator and I hope that this report meets with the approval of this Committee and of the Review Conference.

Thank you, Mr Chairman