Netherlands Statement

under agenda item 13 Financial issues related to the Convention and its annexed Protocols,

Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, Geneva, 14 November 2019

by H.E. Robbert Gabriëlse

Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
to the Conference on Disarmament
Mr Chair,

The Netherlands is pleased that financial issues are addressed under a separate agenda item during the Meeting of High-Contracting Parties. As mentioned earlier in our general statement, we regret that, despite the best efforts of previous chairs, the financial situation of this convention has not significantly improved and that the ISU is currently only partly staffed.

More worrying is the fact that, despite various measures agreed and broad attention for financial issues, some High Contracting Parties continue to be in arrears and continue to flout their financial obligations.

Many High-Contracting Parties – the great majority I should say including my own country – who continue to pay in full and on time, want value for their money. They are not willing to directly or indirectly pay the bills to cover up for the debts of others. We fully met our financial obligations so that the meetings we agreed upon are held, with the administrative and substantive support of the ISU.

We need to solve these problems rather sooner than later, in a sustainable way. The Netherlands cannot and will not agree to measures that disproportionately burden those High Contraction Parties that do meet their financial obligations. In this context, my delegation is very concerned by some of the measures introduced unilaterally by the United Nations, including the withholding of credits. We remain open to further discussing this matter with the UN Secretariat to find a sustainable solution.

Mr. Chair,

Turing to your non-paper with additional measures we would like to thank you for your open and transparent manner in which consultations were conducted. While we regret that more stringent measures to address non-payment could not find consensus at this moment, we are willing to go along with the measures you proposed as a package. But we are not willing to accept that these will be watered down more.

Allow me to underline here, that the proposed voluntary working capital fund is specifically aimed to address liquidity issues and to ensure the continuity of ISU-contracts. Shortfalls in funding for meetings, as a result of none or late payments, cannot be financed from the working capital fund.

Thank you.