

2e Review Conference 2011 on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

Geneva, 31 October 2011

1. Thank you Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to make a statement on behalf of the Netherlands during this important event.
2. I would like to thank Switzerland and the UNDP for organizing this 2nd Review Conference. It gives us an opportunity to look back on what we have achieved so far, and to concentrate on what lies ahead in our efforts to prevent conflict, achieve the MDGs, and look beyond 2015.
3. The Netherlands believes the Ministerial Declaration before us today is a useful tool to do this and wholeheartedly supports its adoption. This conference provides us with a platform to share experiences and prepare concrete steps to prevent further conflict and reduce armed violence in order to promote sustainable development.
4. In this context, I would like to make a reference to the 2011 World Development Report, which reaffirms that security is essential for development. The report suggests economic, political, social and institutional elements for countries to pave their own path towards a just, stable and inclusive society. However, dealing with conflict-affected countries requires a team effort, from governments, civil society, international organisations and – in the long run – the private sector.

5. Several speakers today have already referred to the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, which will hold its 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness a month from today, in Busan (RoK). We are honoured to be a co-chair of this important initiative, which gives countries affected by conflict and fragility a voice in setting the international development agenda and contributes to matching needs and resources.
6. The Netherlands attaches particular importance to the reference to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the Declaration. Their availability and uncontrolled spread has an exacerbating influence on political instability and conflicts in fragile states, and negatively affects development. Peace & security, food safety, economic growth & self-reliance are all matters to be taken into account in the discussion around SALW, reducing Armed Violence and achieving the MDGs.
7. As a Core Group member, The Netherlands therefore welcomes the fact that the Geneva Declaration addresses the issue of SALW as a broader development matter rather than a merely technical problem. We continue to be fully committed to the Core Group's active development of best practices to implement the Declaration.
8. The Netherlands emphasises the need to support partner countries and (regional) organisations in building capacity and setting up activities to integrate Armed Violence Reduction into their development strategies. Promoting the connection with Security Sector Reform, in which the Netherlands is actively involved, is such an example.

9. The Netherlands is doing this together with the country we have been partnered with as a Core Group member, Burundi. The Burundian Security Sector Development Program shows that an incremental approach (no paralysis by analysis), long term commitment, flexibility and country ownership are key in making these integrated strategies sustainable.

10. We have to better and stronger prioritize our efforts in the field of SALW and armed violence reduction in the years to come. Multilateral and bilateral initiatives, such as the integration of SALW policy into poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP's), the development and implementation of national action plans, and working on the *Security for Development Goals* contribute to bridging the gap between security and development.

11. The Netherlands remains committed to the objectives of the Geneva Declaration and to the further development of practical tools to turn theory into practice.

12. Thank you.