Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

delivered by

Sachi Claringbould, Deputy Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament

at

the Conference on Disarmament

on

the Conference on Disarmament and gender issues

Geneva, 10 March 2020
Mr. President,

In addition to the statement delivered by Croatia on behalf of the European Union, allow me to highlight some national perspectives on the issue of gender and disarmament. The Netherlands welcomes the opportunity to discuss these issues in the Conference on Disarmament. I would like to thank the Secretary-General of the CD for addressing us today on this topic. Also, I would like to thank UNIDIR for substantiating our discussions with research: facts, figures and recommendations. The Netherlands would further like to thank the Argentinian Presidency for providing us with the non-paper as a basis for our discussion today.

As pointed out in the non-paper, 2020 is a fitting year to reflect on the adoption and implementation of Security Council resolution 1325. The gap between, on the one hand, the commitment to the Women, Peace and Security agenda and, on the other hand, its implementation remains wide. This is something we all have to take responsibility for. The Netherlands is committed to full implementation of all elements of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and we are currently in the process of developing our fourth National Action Plan, in which we will draw upon the lessons learned over the past two decades.

As one of the lessons learned, the Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs will develop an internal ministry-wide implementation plan, which will be developed together with the forthcoming fourth National Action Plan. This will enable us to be more proactive and result oriented on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, internally, but also in our foreign policy.

Mr President,

On the occasion of International Women’s Day, our mission held an internal discussion amongst colleagues in which we exchanged perspectives on the issues related to gender and diversity. It was apparent these topics go beyond the binary perspectives of men and women, but also touch upon a more diverse range of issues related to sexual orientation and identity. These perspectives must be taken into account when aiming for inclusive societies in which all can participate. Also, some of our female colleagues were hesitant about International Women’s Day, as they felt showing respect for each other and abiding by the principles of equality is something we should do every day rather than being reminded of it once a year.

Increasing the full and inclusive participation of women in international fora, including in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control is a key prerequisite, for achieving full equality in our societies. Studies show that teams that are more diverse make better decisions. Including by ensuring that different perspectives are brought to the table and taken into account. Therefore, the Netherlands continues to advocate for more women in leadership roles and decision-making processes. The statistics provided by UNIDIR on the participation and leadership of women in the CD, show that we have a significant way to go in this body.
The appointment of the first female Secretary-General of the CD in 40 years is a positive first step. The Netherlands encourages delegations to strive for gender parity in their delegations and in particular to increase their roles in leadership and decision-making.

Before I close, following on from Norway’s last remarks today that it is not only the responsibility of women to address gender issues, I wish to thank my colleague Reint Vogelaar, the Netherlands’ Disarmament Delegation’s Gender Focal Point, for preparing my country’s statement of today.

Thank you Mr President.